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A FOREST OFFICER'S CAMP.





FORTY YEARS AMONG  
THE  
WILD ANIMALS OF INDIA  
FROM  
MYSORE TO THE HIMALAYAS

BY  
F. C. HICKS  
LATE DY CONSERVATOR, IMPERIAL FOREST SERVICE

*With 158 Illustrations, 88 Photos, 45 pen-&-ink sketches and 25 sketch-maps  
(103 full-paged and 67 Coloured-Plates)*

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LATE MRS. F. HICKS,

*Daughter of the late Captain Stephen Gordon Prendergast, of Johnstown, Kilkenny.*

**THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF MY WIFE**

to whose constant devotion—through sickness, accidents and dangers of a forest life in India—I owe my life on many occasions. Who nursed me single-handed through an attack of cholera; and again single-handed right out in the wilds when I was terribly mauled by a tigress—through the bitter frost of January, and through the opposite extreme of terrific heat of March, April and May in tents—during which period I was in too critical a state to be moved. Who throughout her married life of over thirty years with me, *never once* left me to go even to the "Hills" much less "Home"—on any pretext whatever; insisting steadfastly throughout on doing what she held to be the duty of a "Wife"—to follow and share at all times the burden of her husband, despite the loneliness of his life in the endless forests—though the "earth be like iron and the sky like brass."

"A true woman, and a true Wife."



THE AUTHOR.

FREDERICK CODRINGTON NEWTON DE FERRERS HICKS,

*Son of the late Reverend William Hicks, M.A., of Sturmer Rectory, Essex,  
formerly First-Lieutenant, R.N.*

## INTRODUCTION.

I AM told that a book of this description requires an "Introduction" to show what kind of an individual the author is, and what his qualifications are to treat the subject in question. This being so, I will have to cast back a bit to see what "hereditary" qualifications I can scrape up in my support.

I think I am justified in saying that the passion for adventure and sport has been a dominant trait in my family for many generations, and was the cause of its close association with the Army and Navy in the turbulent times of the past. However, it will perhaps be sufficient to pick up the thread from my grandfather. The land of his birth was Cornwall, where he owned extensive properties both at Lostwithiel and Penzance ; but the life of a country squire was not likely to suit a man of his stamp, so in common with the traditions of the family he too entered the Army and so saw considerable service. While stationed with his regiment in Ireland, being a man of private means, he maintained a large stable and a pack of stag-hounds, and also a pack of fox-hounds in England ; and one of the results of his various hunting accidents was that he had to have his head trephined. But this did not daunt him, and even after he retired from the Army, he was still riding hard to hounds when past the age of sixty years, and ultimately succeeded in breaking his neck effectually while attempting an impossible jump.

His three sons, John, Richard and William, then took up the running—the two first entering the Army, and the third, my father, the Navy—and went through the thick of the Napoleonic wars, including the Peninsular War, Trafalgar and Waterloo ; my uncle Richard, then a Captain, was severely wounded at Badajoz, while leading, for the second time, a forlorn hope to the breeches—lying disabled for twenty-four hours in a fosse among the dead and dying, with—among other wounds—a bayonet through his knee, before help arrived.

In the meanwhile my father was with Nelson's fleet, and fought at Trafalgar as a Midshipman on board H.M.S. "Conqueror," in which battle he was severely wounded by a cannon ball, which more or



less crippled him for life. However, he took part also in most of the principal naval engagements of that war, being specially singled out to conduct numerous cutting-out expeditions, having previously come into notice by a particular act of daring, when he swam with urgent despatches, through the surf to the Spanish shore, the sea being at the time too high to enable a boat to approach the coast. Being also an expert gun-layer, in the time of battle he was usually employed in training the big guns on to the enemies' ships—and in this manner he met with another serious accident, on the explosion of one of the guns, which injured his eyesight for a considerable time. The climax perhaps of his life was when, as Senior Lieutenant on board H.M.S. "Beleraphone," he conducted Napoleon for the last time to St. Helena.

At the end of the war, my father retired from the Navy and went to Cambridge, where he studied at Magdalene College; and having obtained his M.A. degree, and honours as a Wrangler, he entered the Church, and became Rector of Sturmer, on the borders of Essex and Suffolk, where I was born.

Dear old Sturmer—how often in this land of heat, dust and scorching winds, have my thoughts flown to your cool green banks, overhanging willows and deep clear pools; where we boys used to poach the pike—my elder brother Herbert holding me, the small boy of the party, by the heels over the steep bank, while I deftly slipped the boot-lace snare over the gills of the sleepy fish, with an adroitness born of much practice in such poaching. The joy I felt when, after many fruitless endeavours to capture the veteran pike of Wixoe-pool, I finally succeeded one day in slipping our boot-lace snare round his old gills, and felt it taughthen as I gave my brother the signal to haul me up. We eased our conscience on this occasion by ostentatiously presenting this pike to the rightful owner, who—little dreaming that it was from his own precious pool—was delighted with our present, for it certainly was a monster. What delightful days those were, when we boys spent our time in with our guns, dogs, ferrets and ponies; when there were no cares nor responsibilities; when all the world was young.

What a time we led the surrounding game-keepers. I well remember hearing one day a neighbouring squire complaining bitterly about

“those damned young rascals, the Parson’s sons!”—poor old fellow, his rabbit-warrens were much too close to us for his peace of mind. However, on the whole, we had the entire run of all the neighbouring estates as far as wild game was concerned, for in one way or another we were either related or otherwise connected with most of the owners, so on the whole we boys could, and did, do pretty much as we liked.

Newmarket being comparatively close by, our neighbourhood was a great centre for hunting and steeple-chasing; and being light-weights and good riders, my brother and I were frequently in request to exercise and train steeple-chasers and hunters. It was in this manner that I received an early introduction to horse-flesh and hard-riding.

When the time came for serious considerations in regard to my future, it was decided that I should follow in the steps of my mother’s brother, Commissioner Willimott, and enter the Home Civil Service, and accordingly I was put into the hands of a crammer. This was much against my will, for I always hated my pen with a bitter hatred, as I do still; the result was that I became a “failed C.S.” But in the meanwhile, Government made an offer of free grants of land in the best parts of Canada to the sons of officers who had served in the wars, so my programme was changed and my education took a practical turn, and I was taught to shoe horses, practical carpentering, farming, smithy’s work, etc., etc.,—all of which I found to be of the greatest use to me in my afterlife in India.

But in my case fate was again to intervene. The glamour of the East had got hold of me. I had been reading a lot about the glories of big-game shooting that was to be had there, and I also made the acquaintance of a man from India who still further inflamed my brain with his accounts of the doings in these eastern lands. The upshot of all this was that I point blank refused to follow what I considered the prosaic calling of a farmer in Canada, and insisted on foregoing my birthright, for the pottage in India; my father gave in to my wishes, and obtained for me the appointment of an Assistant Conservator in the Imperial Forest Service of India.

In the meanwhile, other members of my family, accepting the offer made to them by Government, went out to Canada and took up the land allotted to them. They prospered exceedingly, for on that site

has since grown the great town of Halifax, so that each foot of the land is now worth so much in gold. The climate there also appears to be productive of big and hardy men, for I met one of these Canadian cousins of mine years afterwards who stood six feet four inches in height, and he told me that he was the smallest of his branch of the family out there. My father was over six feet, and so were his brothers; but I do not think any of them came up to this young hopeful.

In spite of the somewhat democratic views which have been imposed on me by my hard life—democratic, in my utter intolerance of anything savouring of “side” whether of wealth or position—I am nevertheless proud of the vigour and vitality of my family which I claim to be of a thoroughly English stock of the Drake and Raleigh type. So I hope to be forgiven the references I make here to the doings of some of its members. In keeping with the traditions of the men of Cornwall, the connection of my family with the Navy dates back for hundreds of years; and it will be seen written in history that in 1702 at the taking of Gibraltar, Captain Hicks was the first man to jump on to the shore below that great fortress. Regarding my father's connection with the Navy I have already spoken; he was also connected by marriage with a brother officer of his, Admiral Chevallier Syer, whose niece my brother Herbert subsequently married. Here I might mention that the present Lord Kitchener belongs to the Chevallier family of the above branch.

My brother Herbert was the only one of the family who followed in the later footsteps of his father, by entering the Church of England, and is now the Rev. Canon H. S. Hicks, M.A., Vicar of Tynemouth Priory, Northumberland.

General Hicks “Pasha,” who was killed in the Soudan, was also a cousin of mine; when his photo came out in the papers, my friends charged me with being his brother.

While in this vein I should perhaps also mention that members of my wife's family have also been conspicuous among the makers of the British Empire, such as General Sir Harry Prendergast, the conqueror of Burma, Lord Gough, the conqueror of the Punjab, Lord Roberts, the conqueror of Afghanistan—in comparatively modern times; while in bygone ages their records extend back for more than

eight hundred years, figuring prominently with Strongbow in Ireland, with King Edward III in France, with the Crusaders in Palestine, and with the invading force of William the Conqueror in the year 1066.

But I must really call a halt into this excursion into the past ; but in mentioning what I have, I have not been prompted to do so with a view to merely claiming kinship with aristocracy, for I sincerely regret the aristocratic factor in the situation, which prevents a " poor relation " such as I from being hardly on speaking terms as man to man—much less being on the same family footing which I could rightly claim—with my kinsmen who have stamped their names indelibly in the history of the world in general, and of the British Empire in particular. At the same time it may be admitted that I can justly lay claim to a share in the credit of the family in general, and hope that my inheritance may, in a small degree, be reflected in my own career—in however a small way, for we do not all get the same chances in life.

Now to return to my own humble proceedings : In August 1866, now nearly 42 years ago, I landed for the first time in India, and took up my appointment on the 1st of September 1866 at Hoshangabad, C. P., as Assistant Conservator of Forests, where I made the acquaintance of the famous sportsman Captain J. Forsyth, living in the same bungalow with him, and lent a hand in his various experiments with his famous " shells." While in the district I was employed chiefly on sleeper works for the G. I. P. Railway, which was then only built as far as Khandwa—having a very large establishment of elephants, plants and staff of about 500 men under my charge for the purpose.

From thence I was posted to Chanda, where for eight and ten months at a time I never saw an European, nor heard English spoken ; passing my time in the densest primeval forests with only aboriginal tribes and a few native subordinates as my companions : cut off from all intercourse with civilization and railways by hundreds of miles of almost impenetrable forests, swollen rivers and malarious marshes. Once a month perhaps a runner might arrive with my official post, if he had not been killed or drowned on the way, which frequently happened. If he was able to bring through a few

cigars, a bottle or two of whisky or beer, it was then indeed a red-letter day for me, for otherwise I had to do entirely without such luxuries. This was in the days when the Forest Department in India was an experiment in its infancy, and its officers a body of pioneers; when scientific knowledge of forestry was at a discount, and practical pioneering at a percentage.

After some three years of this life, I was transferred to the Mysore States, where I met and married the best woman that ever fell to the lot of a man to meet. After some seven years of a somewhat roving billet in Mysore, I was transferred back to the Central Provinces—when the British Government handed the management of the Mysore State to the native Raja when he came of age.

Thereafter I was posted successively to the districts of Seoni, Wurdah, Chindwara, Seoni, Chindwara, Bilaspur, Mandla, Jubbulpore and Damoh; that is to say, counting my transfers to Chanda and Mysore, respectively, as one transfer in each case—my billet in Mysore, as already stated, having been more or less a roving one—I had altogether only eleven transfers during my service of 32 years, which makes the very fair average of nearly three years in each District. How the present official generation must envy those good old days, for I know one man who has lately had no less than 21 transfers—a number of them over 500 miles in length—within five years of active service; these were just ordinary transfers as an officiating District Officer, and not due to any special circumstances such as that of a special billet that entailed a lot of travelling about.

In 1882 I met with a very serious pig-sticking accident, my horse being killed under me as we both went over a precipice at the tail of a boar after which I was riding at full speed at the time.

Owing to this accident the doctor ordered me to go on a long sea voyage, saying that I had very little chance of recovering the use of my legs under at least two years—both my knees having been terribly damaged.

Having read a lot about Australia being an ideal place for Anglo-Indians to retire in, I now took advantage of these circumstances to go out with my family to have a look at the place, and took a farm out in the back-woods in New South Wales. Well, all I can say for the accounts we so often read of Australia being the ideal

place for an Anglo-Indian with small means to retire in, is that after personal experience I certainly do not agree.

I was so disappointed with the country that I threw up the farm I had taken, and returned to India, and spent the remaining portion of my leave, shooting in company with my old friend W. K. in the Betul District.

It might be a tip worth mentioning to say that I falsified the doctor's predictions in regard to my knees, by having them cured by means of sea-water within three weeks ; the cure consisted of having



the ship's hose turned on to them every three hours as long as I could stand the rush of water thus applied. The chemical properties of the sea-water thus applied cured me almost completely by the time I landed in Australia.

In 1887 I went Home to England for the first and last time after an absence of over twenty years ; it was in order to place my only son H. at school. My leave on this occasion was only for three months—but it was quite long enough to show me how sadly I had “lost touch” with nearly everything and everybody connected with my long gone past. It was for me a very sad, but instructive, lesson.

However, I had little reason to find fault with my lot in life. My occupation in India was eminently congenial to my taste, for here I led an active, and for the most part an adventurous life. Apart from my official work—which also was of the utmost interest to me—when not engaged in hunting larger and more dangerous game, I occupied my spare time with my dogs, which at one period consisted of a splendid pack of about fifteen couple of Australian Harriers; with these I used to run down samber, cheetle, bears, or any other kind of animal that would give a sporting run or a fight. Hunting thus in heavy jungles with dogs, the use of a horse was of course out of the question; so it was foot-work for all of us—and glorious health and hard condition.

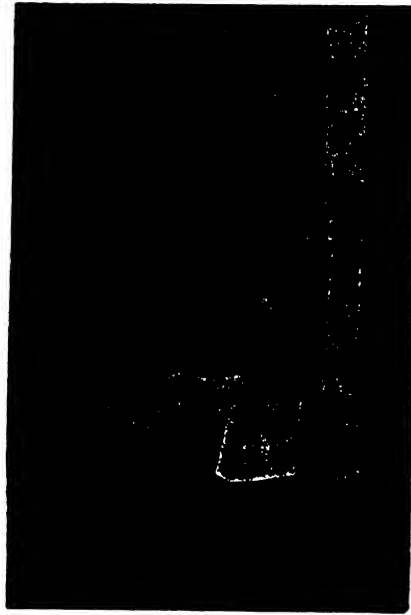


"CHOTA-'IAZRI" VERANDA.

To crown all—what pleasure it was after a hard day's hunting, to be received at camp with a pretty welcome from my wife and my two little daughters. Then a peg (the first and last of the day, for it has been my rule throughout my life never to take any intoxicating liquid of any kind till the sun is down, and then only one peg), a hot bath, and a delicious dinner of game of various kinds, served on a table tastefully decorated by the dear ones at home, in anticipation of the evening's home coming. During the meal to fight over again the battles of the day—every word of which is being eagerly listened to by willing and sympathetic ears.

Then after dinner to adjourn with a cigar to a roaring camp-fire made of huge logs at a little distance from the tents; and there to

discuss our plans for the next day. In the distance the servants and coolies are probably doing the same—or busily engaged in skinning the tiger slain during the day's hunting—or perhaps cutting and apportioning the deer's meat—as the case might be. What more delightful and healthy life could any man wish for ?



F. C. H.  
1910.





## PREFACE.

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It must be kept in mind that the incidents described in this book are perhaps the pick of the experiences of a long period spent almost entirely in the pursuit of big game in dense jungles, where it is the rule, rather than the exception, for the most unexpected combination of circumstances to occur, and where all preconceived ideas are most liable to be completely confuted. Those sportsmen, who have had the most experience of the vast possibilities of the jungles, will be the last to say hastily that any given combination of circumstances is "impossible" in the jungles; and conversely those, with whom "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," will be the first to jump to hasty conclusions and scoff about such subjects; either out of pure ignorance, or from spite and jealousy—to impress on their hearers how vastly superior they are themselves to the man who has devoted nearly half a century entirely to the subject of which he treats.

However, since it may not be given to everyone to "know it all before"—and better! I have in self-defence as it were taken the precaution of supplying as far as possible as much authentication as happens to be within my means to give, in the shape of details, such as the name of the exact locality and the exact date—even to the day of the week in many cases—at which the incident described occurred; so in such cases the scoffer will have it in his power to go in person if he chooses to the place named and make local enquiries as to whether or not the incident I describe actually took place there on the date I mentioned.

Wherever the exact date is mentioned, the details are taken straight out of my old diaries which I still have by me, which were written up by me on the spot at the time mentioned. The majority—I might say all—of the more important incidents described in this book are supported by such authenticating details—for the chief reason because I have on the whole selected only such incidents, the authenticity of which I could supply by such details—even at the expense of ignoring other perhaps more interesting and exciting

experiences, because the details regarding them which I required do not happen to be forthcoming in my diaries—having been either lost or destroyed by insects, wear and tear during the long course of years during which I have knocked about like a roving Ishmælite in tents, never being in one place for any length of time. Under these circumstances, coupled with the fact that at the time it never once entered my head that I would ultimately write a book on sport, it is certainly due more to great good luck than to good management that I still have a sufficient amount left of the insect-eaten and much tattered fragments of my old diaries to supply me with enough details for not only this volume, but sufficient for a second, and perhaps even a third volume.

But be that as it may, the fact remains that I would never have had the courage to bring out a book of this kind had I not been able to supply authenticating facts from my old diaries—for, without any intention of casting a reflection on those whom it may concern, I hold that it is within the power of almost any tyro, at any rate of those sportsmen of the “little knowledge” type, to write a book on big-game sport, by drawing largely on an unscrupulous and imaginative mind.

In minor matters of course, such as in—shall we call it “necessary padding”—which is required to save the account from baldness, such authenticity cannot be given—indeed, I could not give them save from memory; but this, I trust, is sufficiently well understood to be taken for granted. I have already mentioned that at the time when the diaries were written, I never had any notion that they would ever be required for the present purpose, so naturally they do not contain such details. In fact, on going over my maps, I can recall having shot tigers, buffaloes, bison, etc., at many places, but on going over those diaries which I still have, which refer to the date at which I was camped at the place in question, I may find no mention whatever of having shot the beast, or perhaps only a brief note such as: “shot a tiger 9 feet 4 inches,” even though I might have had a certain amount of fun over the incident. In fact the shooting of such beasts was such a common occurrence with me in those days that I rarely gave the incident a second thought, so that the entry of such notes in my diaries at the time were more or less an accident, except

where some special circumstances prompted me to enter perhaps a somewhat longer note. I met a Forest Officer lately who entered the service some twenty years after I did, who asked me how many tigers I had shot ; to this I replied by another question and asked him how many he had shot ; to this he said he really could not tell me definitely, for he only kept count until he shot fifty tigers, and had then lost count. But he had shot fifty tigers in the course of a comparatively few years, in localities where I had been a Forest Officer for more than twenty years before him—when there were no railways as now, and when there were ten tigers for every one tiger there is in the same place now. So will it be wondered at that I also have lost count, many, many years ago. I have a vague idea of trying on occasions to count up and accounting for something over 200 tigers which I have shot ; but whether those were all of them, or only half, I could not say in the least.

Ask the sportsman who has gone out after black buck more or less regularly every Saturday to Monday for the last forty years in the upper plains of India, how many buck he has shot—and you will place him in much the same dilemma.

Now as to the manner in which this book came to be written. One rainy season after my retirement from official harness, having nothing to do, I was apparently more like a bear with a sore head than usual, when my dear wife jokingly suggested that it might keep me out of mischief if I employed my dull hours in writing a book on my shooting experiences. Having nothing better to do, I acted on the suggestion, and sitting down, I wrote out a rough account of one of my shooting experiences, with no more serious object than that of passing the time for the time being. But on showing this rough draft to my son H., he immediately set about questioning me at great length in regard to all the details that surrounded the incident of which I had written ; he then went off to his typewriter and translated a neat and comprehensive account, adding in the further details in their proper place, which he had elicited from me which—as act upon I with the bald account which I had given—made a great improvement to the readability and interest of the tale. I was extremely pleased with the result, and still more so when I found that H. had also drawn a rough illustration of the scene. I then checked the

written account carefully, correcting any mistakes that did not correspond with the actual facts as they occurred—and in a similar manner also corrected the illustrations, pointing out that there should be a tree here and a rock there, and so on. H. then re-typed the written account as corrected by me, and also re-drew the illustration.

My son then made me promise to draft out more such anecdotes, in my spare hours ; and in the course of time I wrote out some two hundred such, from which H. selected and treated in the same manner as above, about fifty anecdotes ; some few of his illustrations made under my guidance, remaining as he made them, while others were re-drawn or improved and finished by my elder daughter, or by Miss Shuttleworth—to whom my best thanks are due for the care she took over these pictures ; while I must also state, in fairness to her technical skill, that Miss Shuttleworth was very considerably handicapped by my exactions in regard to the subjects which she was good enough to deal with according to my lights, and not according to her's—owing to which there are, I am told, many technical faults in drawing, etc., for which I alone must be held responsible.

It is in this manner that this book has come to be written. So the production on the whole, such as it is, is by no means entirely my own, but the results of the combined efforts of the members of my family, which includes myself, my son and two daughters—that is, apart from the help which Miss Shuttleworth so kindly gave us in the matter of the illustrations ; my younger daughter (having been my son's companion during the period when he dealt with the literary part of the question) has been H.'s right-hand throughout.

On the other hand, I hold myself personally responsible for all that is set forth in this book—including in particular those portions which, in the interest of the public, may be somewhat “agin” the Government. I have been most careful in checking all the details and eliminating every point that did not correspond with my own personal opinion or with the facts of my actual experience on the spot. In regard to minor details, already stated, I have of course only my memory to guide me—and whether I did, or did not, actually see of such things as a jungle-cock under certain specified conditions, will have to be accepted in this light. But in regard to more important matters of fact, I have as far as possible made a point of supplying authenticating

details in support of them. While in some matters theoretical, as differentiated from those strictly practical, such as in the case of some portions of the chapter on "Rifles For Dangerous Game," my son H. is the author of the expositions set forth therein, but of course on the lines upheld by me personally ; while also, in a similar manner, he is also the author of the setting forth of the chapter, entitled "Tiger-beating Systematized," on the lines in which I have personally trained him. The sketch maps of local scenes, I had of course to do for the most part from memory.

Having now made a clean breast honestly, as to how matters stand, I will now let the book speak for itself.

F. C. HICKS.

#### NOTE BY H. W. H.

My father has laid a heavy responsibility on me by making the above statement public. The only excuse which I can advance in extenuation of my presumption in taking up the question, in the manner I have, is that I saw clearly that the grand old man, my father, would never have the courage to put his many unique and thrilling experiences into print unless some one took the matter up and pushed it on *volens volens* as it were. But did I say "not have the courage" ? Reader, just look closely into those eyes and say if you see any "fear" therein, and then wonder why we are proud of and speak of him as the "grand old man" and are unwilling to let his exploits remain buried in oblivion as if they had never occurred.

For a man,—whose hobby for over forty years has been to deliberately seek out all the most dangerous adventures he could find, among circumstances which lent themselves pre-eminently to such thrilling experiences—for such a man to have still preserved his life, speaks for his marvellous judgment and resourcefulness, his hardihood, nerve, quickness of eye and brain, his coolness and promptitude to act unerringly on the spur of a moment in times of danger.

The exploits of such a man, and the heroic devotion of a woman such as my mother was, are not matters that should be passed over lightly, as if they were mere mediocrities of the ordinary hum-drum

life of the world. No, Sir, with all filial respect, I must beg to refuse to alter one jot of what I have written in the above.

Again, to show what such an active and out-door life may do for a man, I might mention that a few days ago at the age of nearly three score years and ten, my father calmly performed; in one day on his own feet—for he still disdains a horse when walking will serve his purpose,—a march of no less than 28 miles over the Himalayan mountains—which is perhaps quite equal to a 50-mile march on the level—arriving home with his dogs in pouring rain, as jolly as if he had merely been out for an ordinary stroll. I must say that this is more than even I—at less than half his age—would have altogether enjoyed.

As to my humble share in having re-written my father's book I must at the same time disclaim at any rate certain portions, including those in which the father has spoken far too highly of the son. Also in having forwarded what I considered to have been merely my duty, I must in self-defence claim the reader's indulgence for what is a first attempt as a writer (please don't laugh), though I am aware that this is a very hackneyed phrase; and also (another hackneyed phrase) I make no claim whatever to be a writer in the technical sense—obvious as this may be. I admit beforehand that I have merely made a crude and ungrammatical attempt to give an intelligible account of a series of facts set forth by my father,—and what was more difficult, to *drive them home*, so my critics might kindly keep my admission in mind and let me down lightly and mercifully in these matters; in which case we may be encouraged to bring out a second and even a third volume.

Before closing, I must again acknowledge the kindness of Miss Shuttleworth in the matter of the illustrations, and also re-echo my father in regard to the work done in connection with this book by my two sisters: my younger sister has indeed been my right-hand throughout my endeavours, for what writing I did was mostly done while I was on sick leave, which I was obliged to take owing to a liver-abscess which I got as a result of suffering for a number of years from persistent malarial fever. However, my father as a young man suffered for many years after he first came out to India, in much the same way that I am suffering now—until he finally became acclimatized, after which he had no more trouble—until he got mauled by a

tiger ; so I live in the hope that I am merely going through the mill for a time in the same manner. But I am afraid I will never have the same advantages, nor inducements, to lead the life which made him what he is ; for circumstances have condemned me to spend my life in a totally different kind of country—in a Province of some 70,000 square miles of, for the most part, perfectly level and barren country,—barren but for the fields which extend in deadly monotony for miles upon miles on every side wherever one goes.

H. W. HICKS.





## PRELUDE.

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WITH the progress of modern intelligence we find in almost every branch of sport that thought and experience have been eliminating faults, which at one time were considered a part of the game. Science and system are being introduced into every branch of human pastimes. But, strange to say, the methods employed in the sport of tiger-shooting in India is in the main the same now as in time immemorial.

It were as if the glamour of the Indian jungles, the mysteries which surround its inhabitants, their unreasoning fidelity to time-honoured customs and their bigotted aversion to all change had cast a spell over and hypnotized European sportsmen, with the result that for over a hundred years they have been content to subordinate in this matter their own intellect and intelligence.

An Army Officer in action would not dream of placing his grass-cutter in command of his tactical arrangements while he himself took a back seat ; likewise a similar abdication in sport is equally ridiculous, for if a superior knowledge of tactics and strategy is essential in order to outwit human foes, who by no means spend every minute of their existence in a constant game of hide-and-seek with fate, equally necessary is the exercise of a similar knowledge in order to outwit the cunningest of all animals, namely, an experienced old tiger.

Nevertheless at the present day the rule is, with very few exceptions, for sportsmen to submit themselves entirely into the hands of their shikaris and to carry out blindly all their instructions.

This is a most deplorable fact when one comes to consider what an important factor the pursuit of sport is in the training of our soldiers and officers, a pursuit which should teach them self-reliance and wood-craft which on the day of trial, in the field of battle, will be worth as much again as all the theoretical cramming which they ever underwent. We have only to point to the feats of the Veldt sportsmen of the late Boer Republics in proof of this argument. Yet here in India, with its unrivalled opportunities for the acquirement of this important branch of knowledge in fitting out soldiers to meet the

enemies of their country, we find the Briton, otherwise a born leader of men, abdicating his birthright.

By all means make all use of a native's local knowledge, but the sportsman should use it only in the same way as an Army Officer would in the time of war, namely, as a subsidiary to his *own* plan of campaign and not leave the planning of his campaign to an uneducated subordinate. Hitherto books on this subject, when describing an incident, have described it on the *veni, vidi, vici* principle, without any attempt to explain logically the *reasons* for the results and conclusions arrived at by the specified experiences, or to deduct therefrom a theory or a system which would be of practical use to other sportsmen. The reason for this is simply that the incidents described are not the outcome of any system or theoretical plan, and are due, in the main, to chance and hazard.

Some sporting writers, who are only too often accepted as the "authorities" in matters of tiger-shooting, have made such absurd statements as "each tiger shot costing the sportsman from £100 to £200 per tiger," or Rs. 3,000 per tiger—the cost of a motor-car !

At the present day, tiger-shooting in India may be said to be the monopoly of only those two classes who can afford the weight of numbers—since individual effort is so rare—namely, the District Officials, and secondly, the wealthy few who can afford the expenses of a "big-shoot" with its necessary attendant of a number of elephants and a large retinue of followers, when by weight of numbers, rather than by circumspection, the tiger is conquered.

The impecunious sub and his confrères in other branches of life (who are often keener sportsmen in the truer sense of the word than the exponents of "big-shoot," in that the former are more often more willing and keen to bear the burden of the day themselves, while the latter usually leave it to others) have a very poor chance in this branch of sport, and some of the reasons for this are as follows :—

1. He knows of no system to work on and consequently is obliged to place himself blindfolded into the hands of a native shikari.
2. He is usually entirely ignorant of the existence of the enormous amount of secret opposition which meets every outside sportsman in practically every district of India, and thus he unconsciously

becomes the victim of tricks, without even ever becoming aware that they have been played on him.

It is the author's endeavour in this book to describe as far as possible a complete system which will place the chances of the sportsman of small or ordinary means on an equal footing to that of his richer brethren, in that his success will be dependent on his *own* intelligence and exertions, and not on that of his subordinates ; thus increasing for the sportsman his zest for the sport, and his satisfaction when he ultimately succeeds by his own efforts. This is perhaps the first attempt to treat the subject of tiger-shooting in India from the theoretical as well as practical point of view, and exposes a number of old-timed fallacies (hitherto accepted as the correct procedures on the recommendation of some hide-bound "authorities" who should have learnt better had they ever taken the trouble to reason out matters and think for themselves) which are quite unjustifiably dangerous to both the sportsman and his men, and also to the inhabitants of the country. The average cost to the sportsman for each tiger he shoots—apart from his ordinary living expenses which he would have to meet anywhere—is here estimated at about Rs. 100 (£6 13s. 4d.), and no elephants, etc., are employed. The various full-page sketch maps will give the reader a far clearer idea of the scenes than any word descriptions could do, and will be of great practical use to sportsmen, in that they show him how to deal with almost every combination of circumstance.

Every effort has been made to bring the treatment of the question up to date and more in keeping with modern thought and intelligence, eliminating as far as possible all the old prejudices, traditions and mistakes, assisted to this end by the author's practical experience of over forty years' shooting in the jungles of India.



## CHAPTER I.

### TIGER-BEATING SYSTEMATIZED.

EXTRAORDINARY circumstances are usually productive of extraordinary actions on the part of the individuals concerned. This is especially true of tigers when they are being beaten for. But, strange to say, both European and native shikaris often fail entirely to allow for or recognize this fact.

If when a native, having selected a post for a gun, be questioned as to his reasons for having selected that particular post, it will usually be found that these reasons are something like the following :—

- (a) This spot has from time immemorial been the traditional post for the gun in this portion of the jungles.
- (b) This is a nice *open* place commanding an extensive view on all sides, therefore the tiger will be clearly seen when he comes.
- (c) Do not the footprints of the tiger at this spot show that this is his high road, hence he will surely come down this way when driven.

For the last reason also, though he may sometimes have some notion of the use of stops, the native shikari, if left to himself, more often than not will fail to post them—for “will not the tiger surely come down his usual road?”

Now let us examine the reasons given in (a), (b) and (c) :—

- (a) Fifty years ago, or more perhaps, the local shikari may possibly have fluked the death of a tiger at this spot, and the tradition was thereafter handed down from father to son. Perhaps also in after years some “Sahib” also, by an accidental combination of circumstances, obtained a flying shot at a tiger at this now traditionally “fated” spot, so that its virtues now became more than ever firmly established in the local native mind as being the

one and only post in the locality to which a tiger could be brought before the gun, little taking into consideration the altered conditions at different seasons of the year, or the fact that these jungles may have since been vastly changed by cutting, grazing, burning or other influences, to what they were a few years ago.

But no one more than an ignorant native can be so unreasoningly obstinate in his opinion in such matters. It will be of no use for the sportsman who is accustomed to think for himself to argue with him, for, having once made up his mind on a subject, a man of this nature will not take the trouble to listen to or follow any argument that may present a different view of the matter. Therefore, never argue ; simply hear what they have to say, have a look at the place, consult your map and your own common sense, and having formed your own opinion, act on it, without further palaver—which at least will gain their respect, if not their willing co-operation ; for there is nothing which natives respect and admire more than a man who has the courage to form his own opinions and acts on them—that is a leader—and no one they, in their hearts, despise more than he who consents to be led.

(b) It should particularly be kept in mind that in localities where it is the custom always to drive game only in a certain fixed direction and on to certain fixed points, the game soon become educated regarding those points, especially tigers, and soon learn to know the direction in which the true danger lies, and in consequence will refuse to face it, either breaking back over the beaters or through the lines of stops.

Always avoid an *open* spot for your post, for it is an axiom that no wild animal will face an open spot when driven except at *full speed*.

Your object in tiger-shooting is not to fire at a tiger going like a streak of greased lightning with the probability of missing him clean, or perhaps only hitting him in his hind leg and so cause him to turn a man-eater and do fearful damage.

Therefore, never sit in any place where there is not sufficient cover to enable the tiger to advance quietly under the impression that he

is completely concealed from foes on his *cave* level—he rarely thinks of looking higher than that.

When such cover is available, if properly handled, the tiger will, as a rule, advance quite quietly, stopping every now and again to listen, thus giving the sportsman (who on his ladder, being on a much higher level than that of the undergrowth cover in which the tiger is standing, can see him clearly, though he would not have done so had he been himself standing on the ground on the same level as the tiger) a steady standing shot at the distance of only a few paces.

If a glade unavoidably intervenes, then sit a few yards *within* the jungle with the glade behind you, for all wild animals, when they arrive on the edge of such a clearing, will invariably halt for at least a few moments, if not minutes, in order to take stock of their foreground, to determine whether they will dash across the opening in front of them or to break back ; so if he is posted just inside this cover, the sportsman will then obtain a close standing shot, which he could scarcely miss, as he would probably do had he been seated on the further side of the glade and only got a shot with his rifle at an animal crossing it like a streak of lightning.

(c) The road which a tiger selects for his nightly promenade will very rarely be the one down which he will come in the full glare of the day. When a tiger finds by the means of scent and by the droppings on the ground that certain animals come habitually to a certain part of the jungles at certain times regularly every day, he has sufficient powers of reasoning it out that those animals will probably be there again on the morrow, and he acts accordingly ; that is, on the morrow he lies in wait for them and so secures a dinner. I have seen proofs of this many times in the course of my shooting career.

He also has the sense to apply the analogy to his own case when he finds that he is being hunted in his turn, and will instinctively do all he can to avoid going over the scene of his late peregrinations, where he shrewdly suspects that his enemies will have scented his late passage and will therefore be lying in wait for him there. This is the argument against beating over kills. There is nothing incongruous in this idea, for it is a well established fact that wild



animals are well aware that they leave a scent trail on the ground over which they have lately passed, as is evidenced by deer taking to water and swimming down stream, or a fox doubling on its own tracks in order to throw off the hounds. Therefore, as a rule, do not select a post situated on a path lately passed over by the tiger, for he will then often do a great deal which he would not otherwise do, in order to avoid it. Remember this—a tiger will often fight if you try to force him back over his late footsteps, though in order to regain a forest from which he has lately come, he will probably raise no objection to passing quite close to and parallel with his former track, but not actually over it.

### BEATERS (I).

In tiger-shooting it should be the sportsman's endeavour to conduct the proceedings with a minimum of risk, especially to his men.

It should be remembered that a tiger is not usually dangerous (excepting man-eaters and tigress with cubs) unless it has been wounded *or frightened*; a frightened tiger is a dangerous tiger should it happen to meet any living thing in its path while it is in a panic-stricken state.

A frightened tiger is also an unmanageable beast, and then a hundred chances to one it will either break back over the beaters and in its panic perhaps kill some of them in its course; or else it will charge through the line of stops and so escape out of the beat; or, if it should happen accidentally to pass by the gun, it will do so at such a pace as to render a successful shot almost impossible.

It must therefore be the sportsman's particular care to avoid scaring the tiger in every way possible.

The collective use of drums, horns, fireworks, guns, etc., among the line of beaters, tends to scare a tiger out of its wits and thus renders it unmanageable, with the result that it will often charge blindly through every obstacle, in whichever direction it happens to have its head pointed at the moment when it lost its self-control and panic seized it.

Therefore, as a *general* rule, the use of all "noisy" instruments and the firing of guns, etc., among the beaters should be strictly forbidden. Excessive noise should only be used when the case is one of two unavoidable evils—that of either allowing a man-killer to

live, or to accept the risk entailed of beating for a beast who is known to be in the habit of breaking back over the beaters. In which case the tiger will also have to accept the choice of two evils—either of chancing the suspected danger in front at a rush, or of braving the excessive noise in its rear.

However, the quieter the beat the better. As a rule, with an ordinary tiger, though shouting alone on the part of the beaters, if not done to excess, will not usually scare a tiger beyond control, for tigers are accustomed to hear the shouts of the human voice in the jungles almost every day of their lives, and the only effect it will have on them is the desired one, namely, to make them move off quietly in the opposite direction.

Frequently, when I knew that the tiger was on foot, that is to say, not lying asleep, I have successfully beaten it out and killed it without any shouting whatever on the part of the beaters. The only sound during the beat that was allowed was the clicking of two sticks, which each beater was made to carry for the purpose, accompanied by the shying of stones and ordinary talking among the line of advancing men, but no shouting; the idea being to deceive the tiger into thinking that they are only a party of ordinary wood-cutters, whom he is accustomed to meet and successfully avoid almost every day, and therefore does not connect them with any designs in regard to himself and so does not get flurried; whereas the opposite is the case when he hears an unusual amount of excessive shouting in the ordinarily quiet jungles, especially if this is accompanied by the use of tomtoms and fire-arms, the object of which, his past experiences in regard to such unusual disturbances tells him at once, is connected with him and him alone.

The moral is now clear: Try as long as possible to delude the tiger into thinking that your operations have no particular connection with him in person. But more often than not on such occasions, this "silent" procedure is not compatible with safety to your men, the chief reason being that the tiger is probably gorged with meat and is lying in a heavy sleep, when, if the beaters advance too quietly, they may stumble on top of him as he lies asleep, with the result that, on waking up suddenly to find himself surrounded by men and not having had time to consider as to in which direction

the land is clear, the tiger may lose his head and charge blindly through the men, perhaps killing some of them in his panic and escaping out of the beat. Here we have a case in which *panic* is also caused by the opposite extreme, namely, by what I call the "silent" method of beating, which should therefore only be resorted to when the sportsman has reason to know that the tiger is on the alert, and then only with an even tempered tiger—that is, not with a tigress with cubs or a tiger that is known to be particularly vicious or callous of human beings.

As the safest general method, the medium method is the best. Moderate shouting, clicking of sticks and stone-throwing is always enough to wake up the tiger in time for him to make up his mind and select at leisure his line of retreat, and at the same time it will not scare him beyond his self-control, for tigers are usually very quick of hearing, even when asleep. The principle then is: the least noise possible the better, and the greater the noise the more the chance of causing *panic* and therefore dangerous to the beaters. To deliberately disregard these principles in tiger-shooting and so render the tiger panic-stricken, unmanageable and dangerous, I consider the height of criminal folly. But what can be said of so-called experienced sportsmen who preach the dangerous doctrine of "panic" to younger men who are often only too eager to take their words for gospel. Obvious as these facts are to any thinking men, it is astonishing to see the kind of advice which is given in print by men who should have learnt better, but have not done so simply because they failed all their lives to use their own common sense in the matter, and allowed themselves to be wrongly led.

In proof of this, let the reader take up almost any of the present day books on tiger-shooting, and in regard to the beat he will be almost sure to see something like the following, which I have extracted *verbatim* from one such book (the italics are mine):—

"As soon as we were all seated, the beat began; our *band* on this occasion was *unusually good*. It produced a *loud* and *piercing* discord. Almost immediately was heard the sound as of a horse *galloping* down the stony bed of the nalla. It was a tigress *charging at full speed* like a *flash of lightning* . . . . ." etc.

What else, indeed, could have been expected under the circumstances. How differently that tigress would have come out to the guns had she been quietly and properly handled.

Again, too much noise is only one of several causes which render tigers unmanageable. Another cause is brought about by beating the tiger during the heat of the day in the hot weather season, though this practice also is held up by the "authorities" on tiger-shooting as the correct one to adopt. This practice is a very great mistake and should only be adopted in very exceptional circumstances, and *not* as a *rule* as so many writers recommend.

The stones, rocks, sand and even the ordinary ground during the midday heat of the Indian summer become so hot that any soft-padded animal forced to walk on them is caused excruciating pain, equal indeed to that which would be caused by having to walk on red-hot irons, for I have frequently found tigers, when shot after having been thus bullied during the heat of the day, who had their pads quite raw or blistered, while in one case in my experience the pad of one foot of the tiger came completely off. Such a tiger, to all intents and purposes, is a "wounded" tiger, in consequence of which he is completely off his head with rage and pain, and therefore quite unmanageable and dangerous to the lives of the beaters.

Nevertheless, let us see what one writer has to say on this subject, the author of another book (the italics are mine):—

"Beaters are then collected and a *start* made about *eleven* o'clock, when it is very hot. The object of *deferring* the beat *till the intense heat of midday* is that tigers are very unwilling to travel during the heat; in fact it has a great effect on them, and I have seen a tiger's feet quite raw and blistered by having to pass much over *burning* rocks and sand during a beat."

Here it is acknowledged that tigers are very unwilling to travel during the heat, and that when he is compelled to do so he becomes practically a "wounded" animal, from which it follows that he becomes also very dangerous and unmanageable. Moreover, at this intensely hot season, water is almost as essential to a tiger as it is to a fish; yet it is coolly recommended to make defenceless beaters force such an animal under such circumstances to travel against his will up to the guns.

In such cases there is a great risk that the tiger will refuse to budge from the water, and some of the more foolhardy of the beaters who try to force him from it will be killed ; or, supposing that he made a start in the first instance—perhaps in the hopes of making a dash for some other water—but soon the intense pain of his burning feet renders him furious, and then being no longer amenable to management, he will charge headlong back over the beaters, probably killing some of them, or, through the line of stops, heedless of all their efforts to turn him in the direction of the gun.

But the author of the above book, like many others of the same kind, apparently considers stops a superfluity, for I see no mention therein of their use.

But let us to our muttons, or rather to our tiger's blistered pads. Here again is a case where sportsmen deliberately blindfold their own intelligence and allow themselves to be led by wrong-headed traditions.

I really cannot resist quoting another para. from the above book which happens now to be before me, for it is too delicious (the italics as before are mine):—

“ Then the beat begins by much shouting, *beating of drums, blowing of rumtolas*, or native horns, *and fifes* by the beaters perhaps half a mile away, accompanied by the noise of some *twenty rattles*, which all *combined to create such a pandemonium of sound*, that few decent-minded tigers will stand it for long.”

Poor tiger ! Quite so. And this is the kind of stuff with which young sportsmen come out primed to this country, to be dogged in consequence by what they term “ persistent bad luck ” in all their efforts in tiger-shooting, simply because they are as bad as their predecessors in shutting their eyes to common-sense reasoning.

### STOPS (I).

This portion of the work in tiger-beating stands in the very first order of importance and delicacy throughout the whole range of the operations ; so chalk it up in large red letters on to the walls of your room, your looking-glass, your whisky bottle, or anything else that is dear to you and which you look on often.

The posting of stops on each side of a gun is an art, but an art, the real significance and importance of which is almost entirely misunderstood, if not unknown, to the majority of the sportsmen of the present day in India.

On either side of the gun, the wings of the stops should be so arranged that each stop is so placed in respect to his neighbour that there remains no loophole between them through which the tiger, being properly handled, has a possibility of escape.

The ends of each wing should also, as far as possible, be cleft in with the ends of the lines of beaters.

The amount of noise made by the stops situated at the extreme ends of the wings should be the same as that made by the beaters. But thereafter, the amount of the noise made by each stop respectively must decrease in volume as the position of the stop approaches the position of the gun, until it ends altogether in silence when within about seventy or a hundred yards of the gun—according to the density of the cover. The above is a preliminary on this subject ; more later.

#### THE BEAT.

The attached plan of a beat is necessarily elaborate in order to be explicit. It is given in this form in order to explain a general principle and not a hard-and-fast rule.

The plan is that of a beat in *dense* cover containing sufficient trees upon which to place stops, and worked, for convenience, by one hundred men, sixty of whom are beaters and forty are stops, of the latter twenty being in each wing. The sportsman from his perch on his ladder commands at least 25 yards on either side of him ; so the nearest stop is placed at a distance of 30 yards from him.

*Stops :—*

On the commencement of the beat—

(a) Stops from 1 to 5 (to 70 yards from the gun) will continue to remain perfectly silent until the time when they may see the tiger heading in their direction, when they will only give a low cough just sufficient to turn the tiger but not enough to frighten him.

(b) Nos. 6 to 9 (150 yards from gun) will commence to gently tap a branch, but will make a very slight noise thereby.

- (c) Nos. 10 to 11 (210 yards) will also tap, but louder than Nos. 6 to 9.
- (d) Nos. 12 to 14 (330 yards) will tap loudly and will also keep up a continuous conversation among themselves.
- (e) Nos. 15 to 17 (530 yards) will keep up a continuous though modified shouting.
- (f) Nos. 18 to 20 (770 yards) will keep up a continuous and loud shouting.

It will be noticed that the distance between the stops nearest the gun is much less than the distance between those further away. The reason for this is that the stops further away from the gun are making a much greater noise ; the result is that the tiger will hear the greater noise at a greater distance and will so be prevented from heading in their direction at all, whereas the stops nearer the gun are necessarily quieter or silent, so that here the tiger will not become aware of their presence until he is almost up to them, so that unless the stops here are put close enough together so as to actually command by sight the distance between them, there is a great danger of the tiger slipping away between them unseen.

From the plan it will be seen that the tiger is completely and absolutely tied in without a single loophole of escape, except that of force, to which he would only resort if mismanaged.

He is thus gradually and insensibly led up to the gun, where he will appear quite quietly and probably give a standing shot at only a few paces distance, when it will only be the sportsman's own fault if he fails to kill him dead with the first shot.

Now a few words in regard to the alignment of the stops. Remember that a tiger always dislikes a narrow or tight place, so never if possible place the wings of stops on either side of the gun in the form of an acute angle V, for in being driven from one line of stops immediately on to the other line, the tiger will get panic-stricken and will in consequence break through the stops and escape.

Give him plenty of room between the two lines of stops in which to roam about at leisure and take his own time, for which purpose it is necessary to place the two wings of the stops so that they together form an arc.

Such is the rough outline of the art of placing stops, the further details of which I will go into later.

### A TIGER-SHOOT.

Having given the reader, I hope, an idea of the principle on which the use of stops is based, I will now proceed to put the machinery into motion and try to show how it will work as a whole.

The first point to consider is the selection of seasons. The choice of seasons in tiger-shooting is governed by a number of important considerations, which may be roughly classed as those of the cold weather *versus* the hot weather.

I will now give a sketch of the various seasons :—

#### *15th June, July, August, September :—*

Rainy season ; absolutely precludes systematic tiger-shooting as a general rule.

#### *October, November, December :—*

Water and heavy grass and foliage cover everywhere. In order to avoid the heavy dew and spear-grass prevalent at this season, and to graze on the winter cultivations (rabi), the animals drift down to the fringes of the forests : and tigers follow them. Tigers also now have their best coats, and the cold makes them move about more so that kills now are easily obtained.

#### *January and February :—*

Intensely cold, and water still plentiful : with an additional advantage in that now there is less cover, for the deciduous trees are in the process of shedding their leaves. The jungles now are not so heavy and the climate is delightful all day long. In my opinion this is the nicest time for tiger-shooting.

#### *March and April :—*

Water is now scarce, and the heat considerable but not too oppressive. All the deciduous trees are now entirely bare of foliage, except Mahua (*Bassia latifolia*), Palas (*Butea frondosa*), Amaltoss (*Cassia fistula*), and Achar (*Buchanania latifolia*), which regain their leaves in March or early April. These excepted trees usually grow on the higher grounds or plateaux form-



ing-delightful oasis of very dense shade in otherwise denuded forests ; the agitation of their large leaves in the wind appears to drive away flying insects such as flies, gnats, mosquitoes, etc., and also seems to catch the breeze and deflect it downwards, for which reasons they are the favourite retreats of bears and tigers at this season. Tigers in particular almost invariably retreat to these shades on the plateaux *above* rather than remain down below by the water in the evergreen covers such as Jamun, etc., which at this time of the year are infested with flying and stinging insects, where also they are more liable to be disturbed by human beings coming to drink water or to fish, etc., for at this season it is not yet so hot that tigers are obliged to stay by the water all day as they do during the intense heat of May. It is for this reason that tiger-shooting during March and April is somewhat uncertain, for having had their drink they are independent of water for the rest of the day and are apt to wander a long distance from the scene of their kill in search of suitable shade on the higher grounds of the neighbourhood—perhaps miles before they are satisfied—when the ground being now thickly covered with leaves, it is impossible to track them or ascertain whether they are lying north, south, east or west of their kill. It is a very common and fatal mistake that many sportsmen make in thinking that because March and April are somewhat warm, the tigers must then necessarily be by the water ; so that, while they are uselessly beating the grounds down below by the water, the tigers under the Mahua trees on the plateaux above hear the disturbance and clear off. Tigers, being very suspicious beasts, dislike any circumscription, whether natural or otherwise, in their choice of a lair. In winter, their choice of a lair is not limited in this manner for there is then heavy cover everywhere ; consequently they do not then become suspicious and will lie up quite close to their kills. Whereas in March and April their choice of a lair being limited, they at once become suspicious and wander far from their kills, which makes their quest during these months very uncertain work indeed, and is the cause of much disappointment. So those whom it may concern will do well to remember this.

*May and June :—*

Most deciduous trees are now in partial, if not full, foliage, so that the cover is extensive. But the heat now is terrific both for man and beast, so that tigers are now practically tied to the water and cannot exist away from it, and it is now extremely dangerous work for beaters to try and force them away from it,

to travel over the burning rocks and sand. They should on no account be beaten during the heat of the day at this season (as is usually recommended) if the safety of the beaters is a consideration : they should be beaten only very early in the cool of the morning, or walked up on foot, as we did at Laurimi and Betul—described elsewhere in this book. Of course they are much more easily located now, but in view of the very poor coats which tigers carry at this season, and the great hardships entailed to both master and men by camp life in this terrific heat, I consider the game hardly worth the candle.

*General principle :—*

Except during May and June, as a general rule look for tigers on the *higher* grounds in the neighbourhood of their kill, especially on winter *mornings*, and in March and April.

Tigers, like sambar, always prefer being driven *up* hill, and will often break back if beaten down.

Also, tigers as a rule hate being driven up a *narrow* place such as a gully or a ravine, and in such cases will invariably do their best to travel along on *top* of the bank of such a place, if the bank has sufficient cover on it.

I trust the above hints may be of service to sportsmen, after perusing which the reader may perhaps therein recognize some of the reasons for his past failures in tiger-shooting.

The system which I employ in beating being applicable to any extent of cover no matter how extensive, I am not tied down to shooting only in seasons when cover is at a minimum.

Personally I much prefer the cold weather season for tiger-shooting, for apart from the fact that it is much pleasanter to work out of doors at this time than when "the earth is like iron and the sky like brass," I consider that tigers are much more manageable in the cold season carry better coats, and kills are much easier and more frequently obtainable.

So in the following discussion we will consider that the cold weather is selected as the season for our operations.

In selecting a country the first point to consider, apart from its forests, is its water-supply, for where water is scanty the game will be scanty and tigers here in consequence will be few and far between.

The next point to look to is the presence or absence of villages in the neighbourhood of the shooting area, for where there are no

villages, beaters will not be obtained, unless a standing camp is maintained with the necessary commissariat arrangements ; for it must be remembered that I am describing a shoot which is to be within the scope of sportsmen of moderate means.

Hence the beaters must be inhabitants of the neighbourhood in which the shoot is to be conducted, and not imported from a distance.

If the area to be shot over includes Government Reserved Forests, it will be necessary for the sportsman to apply to the Forest Divisional Officer in charge for a formal permit, stating the number of guns, the period for which the permit is required, and the local names or numbers of the blocks or areas in which it is proposed to shoot.

It is also imperative to first win the goodwill of the leading authority of the district, namely, the District Magistrate or Collector, by writing a courteous letter to him and asking him if he has any objection to the sportsman shooting in that particular portion of his district.

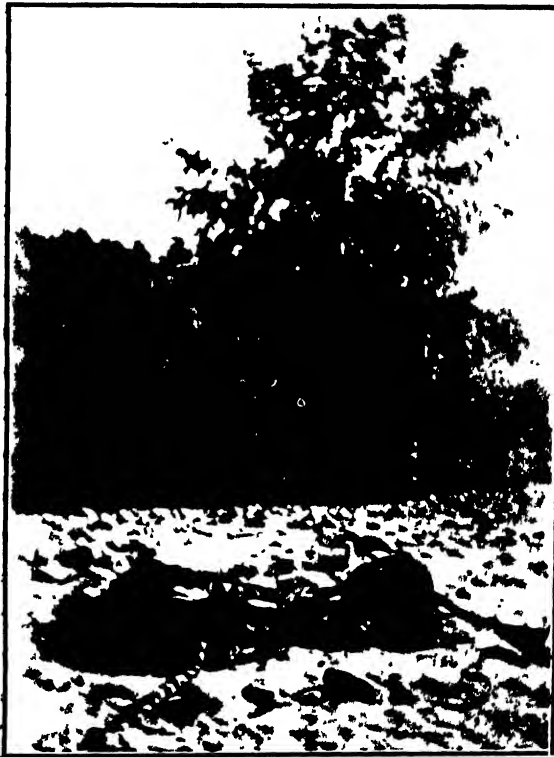
This advice holds good whether the sportsman intends to shoot in Government or in zamindari, forests, for the influence of the District Magistrate is equally potent for the sportsman's comfort and success in whatever part of the district he may be. Where the goodwill of the district authorities cannot be *sincerely* won, the outside sportsman is strongly advised not to attempt to go there at all, but to choose some more favoured place ; otherwise he will merely waste both his time and money. However, on these points I will touch again later.

Now a few words in regard to shooting in zamindari forests. It is a common notion among Europeans that tiger-shooting is to be had only in Government Reserved Forests and that zamindari forests are not worth trying.

This is a great mistake, especially in regard to that finest and heaviest class of tiger, the old cattle-lifter.

Zamindari forests as a rule are open to grazing all the year round, and being the private property of local landowners, these forests are naturally more resorted to by the local cattle than are the Government forests, where the grazing dues are perhaps not only heavier but also the conditions are more exacting and the consequences of infringement more serious.

Again, as mentioned before, during the winter the animals drift down to the fringes of the forests in order to graze at night on the bordering winter cultivations, and tigers follow them ; while in the dry seasons of the year the Government forests are closed to all grazing ; consequently cattle-lifting tigers betake themselves during these seasons to the zamindari forests and put up in such shady covers as happen to be in the neighbourhood of such forests. While the green grass springing up on the ashes of the burnt zamindari



forests attracts animals and the tigers follow them, the grass in Government fire-protected forests has become coarse and uneatable. In view of this, the sportsman, who keeps his eyes open, might obtain very good sport without entering Government forests at all.

But here again the sportsman will find that a little tact and courtesy is also a very useful commodity in his relations with

local native landowners. European sportsmen shooting in zamindari forests very often entirely ignore the rights and privileges of the local landowner or zamindar, and usually fail to obtain, either directly or indirectly, his concurrence with the project to shoot in his private forests. Out of respect for the ruling race the native zamindar usually abstains from making any open objection to such proceedings, but he feels the slight nevertheless, and sometimes the offending sportsman does not get the support and assistance which would be his with tact and courtesy.

The native mind is very susceptible to the mystic ; he respects the Sahib who, though polite and courteous to him, is yet reserved in manner. I am speaking of course of middle class natives, the small landowners whom sportsmen meet in jungle tracts.

On arriving in the locality of a zamindari shooting ground where the sportsman proposes to shoot, he should ascertain the village in which the landowner, or his agent (*karinda*), of the forests in question resides, and on the following day he should make a point of passing through this village, and while doing so, casually enquire if the zamindar is at home. Being informed in the affirmative, he might then pull up at his "chaupal" and ask to see him. He will at once be given a chair, or, in its absence, a native cot to sit on, while the great man is putting on his fineries for the occasion.

It should be remembered that a native who is the owner of one or more villages is usually entitled to be seated in the presence of an European ; so when the zamindar makes his appearance, the sportsman, after the usual mutual enquiries regarding health, etc., should request him also to be seated. Also, in speaking to a native of this position, always use the second person plural "*arþ*" and not the second person singular "*thum*," though at the same time maintain a strictly reserved manner. These are little things, but they carry great weight with the native mind, as tending to raise the individual in the eyes of his fellows and subordinates on the one hand and at the same time preserving mutual respect.

During the conversation that follows, the zamindar should be asked if he has any objection to the sportsman shooting in his forests. This little piece of courtesy will usually have the effect of at once making the zamindar the sportsman's friend, and he will

voluntarily offer to give him every help in his power, whereupon the sportsman should at once take him at his word, and so put him on his honour as it were regarding his personal comfort and success while on his lands, by telling him that if in the future he has any complaints to make against the villagers, he will hand them up to be dealt with by their own overlord, namely, the zamindar. When leaving, the sportsman might ask the zamindar to let him know promptly if at any time any of the villagers have any complaints to make against his camp-followers, whether of non-payment for supplies or of any other kind, and should wind up by inviting the zamindar to return his call. This he will be almost sure to do, if all is going to be well, probably accompanied by a presentation of a "dollie" of flowers, fruit, and perhaps some native sweetmeats.

The sportsman then need have no fear of any obstructions being wantonly placed in his way, provided of course he has first obtained the countenance of the district officials *and has made known the fact to the native inhabitants*; for all his efforts will be in vain if the zamindar has had a hint that the official countenance is against the sportsman, or if he is in doubt on this point; for he has the official with him always and the sportsman only to-day.

But the difficulties do not end here, for having obtained the concurrence of the local landowner and of the officials of the district, the sportsman must next consider the question as to whose personal interest it might be that he should fail to get the tiger—and these are several, which might be classified under the following four heads:—

1st.—Villagers in localities within convenient reach of railways, where they make a regular living by acting as beaters to a constant succession of sportsmen. The death of their local tiger would mean a serious loss to them in *bakshish* and wages, so they will never allow him to be killed if they can prevent it by some one of the numerous tricks at which such people are adepts, preserving the local tiger to serve as a bait to lure a further series of deluded sportsmen. Therefore never be induced to go to such a place.

2nd.—The local professional shikari, who habitually brings out a succession of sportsmen to this locality after the local tiger, to be sent away unsuccessful each in his turn. He is merely a tout for the above

kind of villagers, so fight very shy of him and his proffered services. Achieve neutrality if you can, or, better still, obtain his removal altogether from the neighbourhood during the shoot.

3rd.—The “Chamars”—a low caste of village scavengers, whose universally acknowledged right is the carcase and skins of all dead animals of any kind whatsoever, who also usually obtain from Government a license to appropriate the carcasses and skins of all animals found dead in the forests. These Chamars are an outcaste community usually living in a separate settlement on the outskirts of each village; they are very clannish, in consequence of which it is very difficult ever to get any legal evidence against them, so that they are beyond the influence of the district official authorities, and to a certain extent of their local zamindar also. These people, I might say, live chiefly on carrion, eating the flesh of any kind of dead animal they may find, no matter how putrid it might be, and appropriating, preparing and selling the hides of all such dead animals. Under these circumstances it might be said that they depend for their food on disease and the local tiger. Regarding the local tiger, these people are more conversant with him and his daily doings than any one else; for it is he, when things are dull and there is no disease, who supplies them with their daily food. Those who are intimate with jungle life are aware of the habit which crows have of starting off in pairs every morning to hunt every nook and corner of the jungles for the remains of animals killed overnight by various feline. The Chamars are exactly the same. Having found the kill, the old carrion-crow sits on the topmost dead branch of the tallest tree in the neighbourhood, and depressing both his head and tail simultaneously, announces his joyful tidings with his loud *co-rrrrr-kew! co-rrrrr-kew!* The keen-eyed vulture, perhaps a mile up in the air, seeing the action of the crow below, at once swoops down to investigate the cause; other vultures seeing him follow suit in turn, so that within an hour of the crow's discovery, the air in the neighbourhood of the kill is thick with vultures. The Chamars, who are also on the look out, see the vultures and are also quickly on the scene, and by advancing in a body and shouting, they frighten away the feline and thus secure the remains of his kill. In this manner the local tigers and panthers supply the Chamars with hundreds of kills yearly, and in many

localities they are their one and only means of support, and they look upon them in a manner as their gods.

Can it be wondered at then that Chamars invariably do their utmost to preserve the life of their bread-winner, even perhaps to risking their lives, in the interest of their families, in this matter? Their knowledge of the tiger's habits and temperament is with them a matter of personal intimacy; they also know every twist and turn of the jungles from their earliest days, and know exactly where their tiger is in the greatest danger and where he is safest. What easier then for them than to baffle the efforts of an unsuspecting sportsman? In fact it is these very people whom sportsmen usually employ to tie out their kills, etc. Consequently, long before the sportsman's shikari is stirring, a party of Chamars have arrived on the scene, perhaps even before daybreak, and by means of shouting and stone-throwing have driven the tiger clean out of the jungle to safer quarters.

To show the daring which Chamars are capable of in this line, in even to defying the district authorities, I will give an instance in my own experience.

Some Chamars, on one occasion, were enlisted by my shikaris to help them to tie out kills. On the date mentioned, we obtained a kill, and so certain was I of the tiger, that I did not take the trouble to inspect the scene of the kill. But to my surprise the tiger failed to put in an appearance in the beat. So after the beat was over I went to inspect the remains of the kill, but failed to find any remains of it whatever. The first thing that attracted my attention was the fact that the rope had not been broken, but *cut* clean by a knife. Then I knew for certain that something had occurred; so spreading out my men in a line, we searched the jungles, and after a time found a spot in a secluded nook where the ground was covered with blood, with the footmarks of a number of men and the remains of a small fire at which they had apparently smoked. It was clear now what had happened: the local Chamars had come early, before my men; had carelessly cut the rope, driven my buff off to this secluded spot, killed it and cut it up into equal loads for each man of the party to carry; and then, after having sprinkled some blood on the spot where the beast had originally been tied to make it appear that the tiger had killed it and carried it away, had gone off to their homes.



I at once visited their houses and succeeded in recovering therefrom the remains of the entire buff, including the skin with head and horns attached, so that there was no difficulty whatever in identifying it. These people I had suitably dealt with in accordance with law, and thereafter I had no more trouble in this neighbourhood, beating out and killing the tiger shortly afterwards without any difficulty.

This will show what chance the outside sportsman stands at the hands of these people, especially when the majority of sportsmen are entirely ignorant of the ways, in some cases of even the name, of these people, much less their daring proclivities. So to be forewarned perhaps now will be to be forearmed.

The best plan will be, on arriving on the scene of a new shooting ground, for the sportsman to at once inform the local Chamars that their objects and tricks are fully known to the sportsman, and that a special look out will be kept for them, and that if they are found guilty of any of their pranks the full extent of the law will be used against them. In a case like this each one must fight for his own hand, or admit failure.

This intimation will often obtain their neutrality. But it will never be safe to depend on this, so the special precautions, mentioned later, will also have to be maintained, for in my experience these people are much more persistent in their endeavours to preserve the life of their bread-winner than any other.

4th class (of obstructionists).—In some cases the subordinate officials of various Government departments in the district. With these it is the favour of their official superiors that is at stake, or rather they imagine so, whether it is so or not.

So if the sportsman wishes to make certain of success he must rely entirely on himself, and therefore be prepared to face doggedly a lot of hard work, and withal to use his own wits constantly in reasoning things out for himself, and not indolently leave this sometimes troublesome task to be settled, or, as is more often the case, to be shelved by his native subordinates.

A local professional shikari is quite unnecessary to a sportsman who knows his work. Any ordinarily intelligent villager who is acquainted with the lay of the jungles, the position of the water,

etc., and who could be relied on to answer questions truthfully, is quite sufficient. Such a man, being born and bred in the place, supplemented with the sportsman's map, will be quite sufficient to supply all the information that is necessary. Now in regard to the locating of the tiger. It must be remembered that a tiger soon "works out" a locality; when he has been in one locality for several days running, the animals smell his passings at every twist and turn, so that they either desert that portion of the jungle, or they become so much on the *qui vive* that the tiger comes to the conclusion that it is better to look for pastures new than to seek them where they are all so much on the look out for him. So it is in the nature of the thing that a tiger cannot stay in one place for more than a few days at a stretch, except in specially created circumstances, such as the presence of a herd of domestic cattle or where he is retained by the treacherous hospitality of sportsmen.

In my opinion, as a general rule a tiger does not kill more than once in about five days; that is to say, he arrives in a fresh locality, takes one of the animals here unawares, kills and eats of it on the first and second, and even the third day; this lasts him through the fourth and fifth days, after which he again begins to feel the pangs of hunger, but finding that the animals here are now all on the look out for him, he marches clean away, in one night often going for twenty miles without stopping. He then kills again, and the performance is repeated, after which he moves on to a third place—moving generally somewhat in a circle. By this time the first place has had a rest of some ten or fifteen days or more, according to the luck he has had elsewhere; so he again visits the first place, and so on, round and round on a regular beat goes the tiger.

These beats range from eight to twenty miles in length by eight to ten miles in width, according to the seasons of the year and the strength of the individual tiger in command, so that the extent and durations of the tiger's peregrinations usually become well known to the jungle tribes and local villagers, who may often be heard to say, when talking among themselves: "he (the tiger) was here so and so many days ago, he is therefore probably at such and such a place now, so he will be back here again in so and so many days."

The old proverb about the stern chase being a long one is very true in tiger-shooting. "Dogged that does it" is my motto in tiger-shooting; sit tight in one place where you *know* the tiger is bound to come in the ordinary course of his rounds; stick to it and hang on doggedly to that one place, using the interval of waiting in educating the inhabitants of the locality as to the reality of your grim determination to slog down that particular tiger even if you have to stick there for a year for him, at whatever cost to yourself and to them. Scout all the suggestions they are sure to make to the effect that the jungle in which you are at the time being is not the resort of the tiger you want; that in such and such a jungle ten miles away a very much finer tiger resides, etc., etc. Make them understand that no other tiger than this particular one will satisfy you. They do not mind taking risks with strangers if the risk is only to be of a few days' duration; but if it is going to be prolonged indefinitely, the risk of being caught out redhanded at their pranks sooner or later becomes too great and frightens them; but when they finally realize the situation and gauge your unalterable determination to *stay* till you do get the tiger, they will throw up the sponge, if for nothing else but to get rid of you and your unpleasant followers. This is more than half the battle, for now, with judicious handling, the tiger is as good as dead.

On the other hand, if the sportsman goes running about all over the country, knowing that he is not going to stay with them for any length of time, the natives do not hesitate to play their pranks, for they have no time to learn or fear the character of the sportsman.

It is better to sit tight and get one tiger in six weeks than to spend six years in futile pursuit, as I have known some men to do. In fact I know a number of men who, owing to their habit of striking camp instantly the moment they heard of a kill a dozen miles away, have been out in India trying spasmodically after tigers in this manner for ten years and more without shooting a single tiger. I therefore cannot agree with Mr. Aflalo regarding the following paragraph taken from his book entitled "The Sportsman's Book for India":—"Throughout all the central and southern parts of India, with which I am acquainted, a two months' shoot involves marching in all three or four hundred miles zig-zagging about

as you hear of tigers having killed cattle, and moving camp on an average ten or a dozen miles every alternate day." I have not only been acquainted with the central and southern parts of India, but I might also say I have been familiar with them for over thirty years, and that as a Forest Officer. And I do not think, were all official influence and pressure entirely withdrawn from a sportsman in these regions and he were left unsupported to depend entirely on himself and four or five personal servants, if he adopted Mr. Aflalo's advice of moving camp ten or a dozen miles after tigers every alternate day, I do not think he would shoot one tiger in a dozen years, except by coming across one accidentally as he might do even in Piccadilly should one escape there from a travelling menagerie. But that would not be by woodcraft, with which we are now dealing in its scientific sense as applied to the sport in question.

I maintain that three parts of the battle is in the overcoming of local obstructions ; and this, a sportsman who is shooting entirely off his own bat without any official help, is quite unable to effect if he elects to rush about all over the country as recommended by Mr. Aflalo.

Sit tight in one place and hammer away doggedly, and do not leave the place until you do get the tiger. At most you will meet with your reward within six weeks, if not within six days, if your character for doggedness be known. Most young sportsmen would perhaps consider such a result satisfactory.

In every matter in which there are dealings with natives of India, the only road to success is to acquire a knowledge of the workings of the Oriental mind and how to meet them.

It is for this reason again that accurate large scale maps are so necessary to sportsmen in India. But when so many sportsmen, through thoughtlessness and want of observation, are ignorant of even the existence of such a necessity, what wonder then that so few of them ever trouble to take out large scale maps with them when out shooting, and are thus compelled to place themselves entirely in the hands of such people.

With a large scale map of the locality, the sportsman can at once convict an inaccurate informer or shikari ; and as soon as the latter recognizes this power, that moment he will fear his master and the battle is won.

Two maps are required for the purpose ; one to a scale of one inch to one mile to give a good general idea of the lay of the country, and a second of four inches to one mile to serve to work out the more detailed schemes when the time comes to determine the direction of the beat, etc., etc.

With the help of the most trustworthy and intelligent of the local men, the sportsman should make himself thoroughly conversant with the lay of the country and of his maps, marking by hand on the latter all the places where the local men say there is water, thick or thin cover, etc. ; after this he should spend a couple of days or more in thoroughly checking and making himself acquainted with every nook and corner of the area to be worked over, making careful notes the while, both on the maps and in a note-book for the purpose.

Now let us see how we stand. This is a cold-weather shoot : we have obtained the necessary permits, gained the favour of both the district and local authorities ; we have demonstrated against the local Chamars ; we have inspected and checked the forests and made ourselves thoroughly acquainted with all the details connected with them. Consequently we are now in a position to judge which is the best spot at which to obtain a kill in view of a beat on the following day.

#### TYING OUT A " KILL."

This is a very important work, for on the spot selected, and on the manner in which the kill is tied, will depend to a great extent the success or non-success of the beat on the following day. I will attempt to tabulate this work :—

- I.—(a) The spot selected as the site for the kill must be at least within two miles of good water at which the tiger can drink after he has killed and eaten. The closer the water the better, but it is *not a sine qua non* in the cold weather for the kill to be tied very near the water ; if the kill is within about two miles of water, the tiger, after having killed and eaten, will go and have a drink, and then, as a rule, will return to the neighbourhood of his kill, where, if the cover is good and other things also satisfactory, he will usually lie up within a few hundred yards of his kill and not require another drink till the evening.

- (b) The spot selected must also have good and sufficient cover near by in which the tiger could lay up.
- (c) The cover must be such as can be easily beaten ; that is to say, not consisting of impenetrable thorn jungles, such as the "wait-a-bit" thorn, the cane-brake or *beri*, which, when matted with grass and other undergrowth, make the cover absolutely impenetrable to beaters, though animals, having tunnelled their "runs" under the thorns, can move about in such cover without difficulty, where it would be impossible for human beings to attempt to do the same. I know of such places in the Doon (Dehra) and in parts of Chanda where the country for hundreds of square miles is covered with enormous extents of this fearfully dense and matted thorn bush ; these areas simply swarm with game of all kinds, in particular with cheetle and tigers (in Chanda with also bison and wild buffaloes), the reason being that in such covers they are inaccessible to their human enemies, for it is a physical impossibility to beat them out of it.

Sportsmen are advised to keep clear of such places, or only to work on the outskirts of them. That is to say, the sportsman should in such cases proceed to find some other good but "workable" cover and water situated in the neighbourhood of the thorny refuge of the tigers ; not too close, say, about two miles off. Here he should tie out his buff ; and the chances are that within a few nights, during their nightly peregrinations, the tigers will probably come across the buff and kill it. Finding good cover and water near their kill, they will then not take the trouble to return immediately to their thorny refuge, but will lie up close to their kill on the following day.

- (d) Do not tie your kill in the neighbourhood (not within five miles of such) of any caves in which the tigers will be able to take refuge during the beat on the following day, for it is often impossible to turn them out of such places, where they will remain till nightfall, when the baffled sportsman will have to leave them.
- (e) The spot selected must be situated near cover which is not habitually disturbed by grazing of cattle, cutting of wood,

grass, etc., for the tiger is sure to be acquainted with the fact, and would of course refuse to lay up in the neighbourhood of his kill where, by experience, he is well aware that he would be disturbed on the day following. Some of the more experienced tigers get to know very well that a beat for them on the following day is a necessary sequence to their having killed an animal on the night previous which had been *tied*, so that, though they may kill and eat a tied animal, they make it a principle to clear out of that portion of the jungle immediately afterwards, knowing full well by past experience, that after having killed and eaten an animal which they have found tied in the jungles, that jungle will be beaten and disturbed on the following day by that strange species of apes whom they dread so much. In the case of such tigers, the remains of their natural kills must be sought for—if not, that of a wild animal, then a herd of domestic cattle must be *driven* into the haunts of the tiger in order to allow him to kill one of them.

- (f) The jungle to be beaten on the following day must be so situated, that there is a good *lead* of cover from it to another jungle to which the tiger would have no objection to being driven.

## II.—*Manner of Tying.*

- (a) The bait should be tied by either the hind or fore leg (above the fetlock) and not by the horns or neck as illustrated in Mr. Saunderson's book. It stands to reason that a rope round the horns or neck is an unnatural sight in the jungles, and as tigers are always very suspicious of traps, this in most cases is enough to make even an unsophisticated tiger suspicious, while in the case of an experienced tiger nothing in the world would induce him to touch such a bait. On the other hand, if the bait is tied by the leg, the attachment is practically out of sight, or, if noticed at all, would pass for a piece of weed.
- (b) Care should be taken in tying the rope round the fetlock that it does not cause unnecessary suffering to the animal

by galling it as so often happens when the unfortunate brute is tied out night after night by the same leg without meeting its fate. Either change the leg frequently, or tie a light bandage of dark-coloured cloth and tie the rope over that.

Be careful to tie the animal on a level piece of ground and not on the side of a bank ; for in the latter case the animal will frequently, in its struggles, topple over to the full extent of its rope and hang down in an awkward position down the bank, and being unable to again recover its feet, will be found choked to death in the morning. I have personally seen this happen.

- (c) The rope with which the bait is tied should be only strong enough to prevent the bait itself breaking it during the night, but not so strong that the tiger will not be able to break it.

If the tiger is unable to break the rope and drag away his kill, and thereby fails to show the *direction* in which he is lying up, the sportsman may as well stay at home, for he will have nothing to indicate to him as to in which direction to beat. It is a very common mistake to tie the bait so strongly that the tiger is unable to break the rope, in which case, as I have already said, the sportsman may as well stay at home.

If, however, the tiger is able to break the rope, he will drag his kill in the direction of the cover which best *pleases* him, and he is therefore more likely to stay by it on the following day ; moreover, the broad trail or "drag" on the ground, made by the carcase of the kill having been dragged by the tiger (it is for this reason that the bait should be heavy enough to oblige the tiger to drag it and not lift it clean off the ground in his mouth), will clearly indicate to the sportsman the direction of the cover which the tiger has of his own accord chosen to lie up in. On the other hand, if the tiger is unable to break the rope, the fact that he is unable to drag away his kill, as he is accustomed to do with his natural kills, would at once make him suspicious, with the probable result that he would forsake the kill for good as soon as he had satisfied his hunger on it ; while moreover, not being able to drag away the remains and hide them, he knows that the vultures would leave him nothing of it by the



evening. Even if the tiger did happen to elect to remain on the following day somewhere in the neighbourhood of his kill, having no drag to indicate the direction in which the tiger had gone, the sportsman would be unable to locate him with any degree of certainty, for in thick cover—over grass, leaves or rocks—the soft pads of a tiger leave no marks.

My experience is that when tigers fail to break the rope of their kill, they almost invariably go long distances away from the kill, so that the sportsman, having nothing to guide him, will be unable to make up his mind whether to beat the blocks of jungle lying to the north, south, east or west of the kill, while a single mistake of course will spoil all the other chances of a successful beat for the rest of the day, should the tiger happen to have been within hearing distance of the first beat.

In parts of India the natives are in the habit of using, in the place of a proper rope, a good imitation (as long as it is green) made from creepers (bale), barks of certain trees (buckle), or young bamboos ; the latter they crush with the back of an axe and then twist the fibre into a rope. These kinds of rope are very strong indeed in their green state, especially the rope made from bamboo which even an elephant could hardly break ; they are made in a few moments on the spot, for the materials in the jungles are always at hand, and for this reason natives will usually not take the trouble to take out a proper rope with them. So the sportsman must see to this point himself and insist on a proper rope being taken and used, though, on the other hand, it is by no means necessary to use too thin a rope, for it must be remembered that a tiger has enormous power and could snap a rope which perhaps even six men could not break.

- (d) The bait should be tied as far as possible in a clear spot, with no kind of obstruction near it, under the cover of which the bait could lie down and hide. The root of a tree is the best, provided the root is well away from the trunk of the tree. If a peg is used, it should consist of a stout stake four feet in length with a hook at the end to prevent the rope slipping off it ; this should be sunk at least three feet into the ground, and then well rammed round with stones, in order to make it so firm that the tiger cannot possibly pull it out of the ground while breaking the rope, for if he

pulls up the peg with the rope, the bumping and jumping of the dangling peg as it is dragged along in the cover is very apt to scare the tiger and cause him to drop and forsake his kill. In sandy soil, instead of a peg, a deep hole with curved sides may be dug, and a bush or a branch embedded in it with one end of the rope attached to it, which can then be covered over and the hole filled up firmly and wedged with stones, sticks and sand.

Again, it is easier to break a piece of string that is long enough to be jerked than a piece of the same string that is too short to be jerked. Also, our object in tying the kill is that the tiger should be able to break the rope and take it away to show us the direction in which he has gone ; therefore, do not tie the bait by a rope that is so short that the tiger is unable to get a *jerk* on to it and break it. If left to themselves, natives are very apt to tie the leg of the bait too close to the peg, with perhaps only four inches of rope between it and the peg. On the other hand, too long a piece will get the bait into trouble by getting wound round his other legs or some other object ; about twenty inches between the peg and the leg is about the right length and sufficient to enable the tiger to get the necessary jerk on it and break it, though he might have failed to do so with only a straight pull—to the ultimate disappointment and disgust of the waiting sportsman. These are little things, but a very great deal depends on them.

### *III.—Sites for " kills".*

- (a) Having selected the locality within which the bait is to be tied, we have now to determine the actual spot at which it is to be tied.

One hears a lot about the powers of scent of a tiger. In my opinion his powers of scent are *nil*, or at any rate not one bit better than that of civilized human beings ; and this also stands to reason. Civilized human beings have only inferior powers of scent simply because they have no essential cause to use them ; the same reason holds good with the tiger. Other wild animals have to rely for their safety on the keenness of their powers of scent, consequently with them these powers are constantly in play and are therefore

maintained at the highest pitch of excellency ; but the tiger being well aware that the only enemy he has cause to fear is normally not abroad at night, so at night the tiger is veritably lord of all he surveys and fears no creature other than man. He is also not a scent-hunting animal, for his other powers are so great that he can in his hunts generally pick and choose his dinner when and where he pleases. Therefore, having no use for the exercise of his powers of scent, these powers in him are very dull indeed, comparatively speaking, exactly the same as in the case of civilized human beings. I have myself seen the footmarks of a tiger pass by (without the slightest signs of hesitation or halting), a small bush on the further side of which a fat young buff was lying quite quietly ; which showed clearly that the tiger was unable to smell even a strong-smelling animal, such as a buff is, even at a distance of five feet.

Some years ago I was chumming with a man who had a tame tiger and also some panther cubs ; in the compound of our house there was a patch of grass up to, and in and out of, which we used to drag the inside of a sheep, for the purpose of making the tiger and panthers respectively hunt the trail. The panthers at once put their noses to the trail and scented up the drag till they found their dinner ; but the tiger, the fool, never put his nose to the trail, but, knowing that his dinner was to be found somewhere within the patch of grass, would go bounding round and round in circles with his head held high—looking for it with his eyes and not with his nose—so that we frequently saw him actually pass right over his dinner without smelling or seeing it.

I have also frequently seen this illustrated in their wild state, panthers invariably scenting up the drag of their kills when it had been removed, but I cannot recall a single instance of ever having seen a tiger do so, though I have frequently seen them wander round more or less aimlessly about in circles looking for their removed kill.

As for an old tiger scenting a sportsman up in a tree, as we so often read of, I consider the suggestion absurd.

On the other hand, he is extremely quick of sight and of hearing, even to the extent of hearing the breathing or even heart-beats of an excited sportsman up in a tree on a silent night.

It is undoubtedly to these two extremely highly developed powers that he depends, not only to warn him of a possible danger, but also to enable him to procure his dinner.

To give his powers of hearing and sight full play, a tiger at night never forces his way through dense cover, unless of course he has already marked the position of his quarry and is in the act of stalking it. Being at night the monarch of all he surveys, rather than face all the unpleasantness of having to force his way through a lot of dew-sodden undergrowth or grass, the tiger naturally selects the easiest and most open courses, such as the open beds of rivers, footpaths, roads, fire and check-lines, etc. By doing so, he not only avoids the dew-sodden undergrowth, but also commands a more extensive view, which enables him to see or hear his prey at a distance, before they scent his own presence, so that he is thus better able to make his plans to stalk them.

On such places his footprints are to be clearly seen, so that all his favourite nightly promenades are well known to the local men.

It is now clear that in selecting a spot for the bait, that spot must, other conditions being satisfactory, be as far as possible an *open* one, such as a cross-road or other open place usually promenaded at night by the local tiger, and from whence the bait can be seen at a distance, as far as possible from all sides, for it must be remembered that when animals are tied out at night as baits in the forests, they know their danger instinctively, and consequently at nightfall they lie down and remain as quiet as a mouse all night without a sound or a move, except occasionally when they shake their ears or head in knocking off mosquitoes or gnats.

- (b) In some districts the forests are so vast and dense, as in Mundla, that it is often impossible to find any such open spot, which is also conveniently situated otherwise as a site for a kill. In such forests the tigers simply use the narrow tracks made in these forests by other wild animals; and as there are thousands of such tracks in every direction, it is often impossible to say which one the tiger is likely to use on any specific night. Here an ordinary wooden bell of the type usually worn by cattle may be brought into use.

It must be remembered that almost every tiger in existence will have at some time or other made his acquaintance with domestic cattle, at any rate in the tracks with which this book is dealing, and in consequence is familiar with the bells which the leaders of every herd of such cattle wear and probably associates the sound with the memory of many a juicy beef-dinner.

These bells can be heard at a great distance, and serve the double purpose of guiding the herd and also attracting the tiger to them. This fact can be utilized with great effect by sportsmen working in dense forests, for all he has to do is to tie one of these wooden bells round the neck of the bait, and every time the latter shakes his head in knocking off the mosquitoes, the familiar sound of the bell will be sent echoing on the still night air across hill and dale, hearing which the keen-eared old tiger on the hillside, perhaps a mile away, will hurry down to hunt up what he considers to be some belated cattle that have strayed from the herd.

A metal bell, however, should not be used, for the metallic ring appears to jar the nerves of a tiger and makes him hesitate, as occurred in one case in my experience, when a metal bell was placed on the neck of one of my baits: the bell attracted the tiger up to within a certain distance of the kill, but beyond that he refused to come; and after hanging about the bait all night he eventually left it untouched.

Natives when leading cattle wearing bells are frequently in the habit of stuffing up the bells with grass or leaves, in order not to be annoyed by the constant sound; they often do this when taking an animal to tie out as a bait, and then omit to release the bell by taking out the obstruction.

#### *IV.—Baits or "kills."*

As baits may be used young buffs, bullocks, or ponies, and at a pinch even a pig or a donkey; but the two latter are too small, for besides leaving no drag—for the tiger would lift it clean off the ground in his mouth—there would not be enough left of the carcase, after the first feed, to induce the tiger to lie up near his kill on the following day, with the object of having a second feed on the remains in the evening.

I have noticed at times that a tigress with cubs, for some peculiar reason, much prefers a pony to any other kind of bait. But taking it all round, there is nothing a tiger likes so much as a nice fat young buffalo about eighteen months old ; so the sportsman must see that his buffs are not younger than about fifteen to eighteen months old, otherwise they will be too small, in which case, besides leaving little or no drag, they will be wasted by being killed systematically by every wretched little pantheret that happens to pass by. On the other hand, the buff must not be too old or large, for a tiger after all is a very cowardly beast and has a great respect for a full grown buffalo. In fact they are in a blue funk of them and will give them a wide berth if the buff is capable of showing any appearance of putting up anything like a decent fight for his life ; even a calf of six months invariably faces a feline with a lowered head, so that when an older and larger buff does this and pretends to rush at the advancing tiger, the prestige of his race is often sufficient to cause the tiger to relinquish his intentions regarding him and seek his dinner in safer quarters elsewhere, to the disappointment of the careless sportsman who tied out too large a buff.

I have known a 2½-year-old buff tied up in this manner as a bait, who successfully bluffed and kept off a tiger throughout the whole of one night. A buff of eighteen months or under, however, presents no difficulties to a tiger.

The female buffalo is much valued in India on account of the great quantities of very rich milk which it gives : apart from this these animals are utterly useless, for, being unable to stand the heat of the sun, they are of no use as beasts of burden in any way, invariably lying down at the first water and refusing to budge. So the male buffalo is of no use whatever, except as sires for breeding purposes, when one bull to fifty cows suffices, the remaining forty-nine male calves out of every fifty being either knocked on the head at birth, or sold to the Chamars for a few annas to be slaughtered and eaten before they get too old and tough for the purpose. Consequently sportsmen can always obtain young male buffs suitable for his purpose very cheaply everywhere, at about Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 each.

It must be remembered that a tiger in his full strength is a very fastidious beast indeed, for it is in his power to pick and choose his

dinner as he pleases, and will therefore refuse to kill any decrepit or diseased animals, except when driven to do so by hunger, which is a rare occurrence.

Some sportsmen think to save their pockets by buying up only old and decrepit animals to be tied out as baits for tigers.

I once met such a one in Mysore, who complained bitterly to me that though the tigers in a certain locality were numerous, they yet refused to touch his baits. I visited this locality myself soon afterwards, and on tying up nice fat young buffs, I found that I had no difficulty whatever in obtaining kills, for they were snapped up at once by the tigers, six of whom I shot there in one month : while by local enquiry I learnt that my predecessor here had bought up as cheap baits for tigers all the old and diseased cattle he could find in the bazaars, with the result that these tigers, who had plenty of wild game around them, absolutely refused to look twice at these creatures thus insultingly offered them.

On hundreds of occasions during my career as a Forest Officer I have seen the remains of cattle that have been killed by tigers out of herds that were grazing in the forests for which, in my official capacity, I had given out licenses, and in every case it was generally the fattest animal of the herd which had been deliberately selected and killed by the tiger, often a fat young heifer in young, showing that the tiger had deliberately picked out his prey from among all the rest as the best. On one occasion I saw the whole proceedings from start to finish of a tiger deliberately selecting and stalking the fattest heifer of a herd of cattle, and kill it in broad daylight in front of my eyes ; this occurred at Cherrapatla in the Hoshangabad District.

I trust I have now driven home the point that tigers *do* discriminate between an animal that is in good condition and the one that is bad, and it stands to reason that they will not take the trouble to kill an animal that is unfit for food when they have so much fat game around them to choose from.

#### *V.—Inspection of kills.*

- (a) For this purpose the sportsman should send out *together* two parties.

- (b) One of these two parties, which we will call for reference the first party, should consist of four of the sportsman's own private men, as differentiated from men hired locally on the shooting ground, whom we will for the above reason call respectively A, B, C, and D ; A being the Head Shikari trained personally by the sportsman himself, B the Assistant Shikari, and C and D two orderlies.
- (c) The second party should also consist of four men, E, F, G and H, of whom only E need be a privately trained man of the sportsman, while the other three can be hired coolies of the locality of the shooting ground. The duty of this second party is only to accompany the first and more important party and to collect as they proceed on their rounds of inspecting the various buffs that have been tied out overnight, all the buffs that have not been killed, and when the last buff has been inspected, to drive them to camp, thus leaving the first party free to devote themselves entirely to more important work should one of the buffs prove to have been killed by the tiger.
- (d) The duty of the first party is to accompany the second party until they happen to come on to one of the buffs that may have been killed overnight ; when A, the Head Shikari, should halt his own party and then send on the second party to collect and take back to camp all the remaining buffs tied out in other directions, taking care in doing so that they will not disturb the tiger in the neighbourhood of his present kill. He should then carefully note the following points :—
- (1) the footmarks to see whether there are one or more tigers and whether male or female, taking their measurements with a piece of grass ;
  - (2) the *direction* of the drag ;
  - (3) the estimated number of men likely to be required to beat the particular cover in the direction of which the tiger has dragged the kill ;
  - (4) the direction of the water ; if he has not already made himself acquainted with this information, he should do



so from the local men F, G or H of the second party before he sends them off.

On no account must the drag be followed up now for fear of disturbing the tiger.

After having ascertained all these and any other necessary facts on the spot, A should leave B, the Assistant Shikari, to carry out his own duties on the spot in conjunction with C and D, the two orderlies, while he himself hastens with all speed to camp where he will report all the facts in detail to his master.

- (e) On the departure of A from the scene of the kill, the remaining three men of his party should proceed to take up their respective positions in that portion of the jungles, where they will maintain a silent watch for some three or four hours until the sportsman arrives on the scene in person—this in order to prevent any interested persons from entering the jungles in the meanwhile for the purpose of driving away the tiger. B will take up his post on a tree about two hundred yards in the rear of the spot where the kill had taken place, from whence he can watch and prevent any persons trying to get at the remains of the kill. C and D will take up two other posts, so that the positions of the three men will together make more or less an equilateral triangle with the supposed position of the tiger lying at about the centre of that triangle, each of the sides of the triangle being about a mile in length. From these three points these men will maintain a silent watch, and on no account will make any noise or smoke; they will prevent, and if possible stop, any intruder; and will particularly note the direction of the calls of all wild animals as denoting the presence or movements on the part of the tiger in the directions of such calls. Should either C or D at any time become aware by these sounds that the tiger has changed his quarters or has moved out of the jungle in a certain direction, he should at once proceed to and notify B of the fact.

When the sportsmen arrives on the scene of the kill, B should report to him in full all that has occurred, especially the directions of

the calls of wild animals as indicating the movements of and the present position of the tiger.

By these means all interference will be prevented, which, as I have said before, is certainly half the battle, for when such people learn of the precautions which the sportsman habitually and systematically maintains, they will be too afraid of being caught red-handed by some silent watcher seated up in a tree, so that they will not dare to enter so carefully guarded a forest.

The reader will be making a great and fatal mistake if he neglects these precautions as being too elaborate to be practicable. If the sportsman's private men have faith in their master's capabilities and industry, as they very soon will if he shows himself worthy of it, they will in their own interest carry out his instructions with sufficient accuracy to ensure success.

That these precautions *are* absolutely essential to success I can emphatically assure my readers. Even as one of the District Officers and head of one of the Government Departments of the District, with great local influence as District Forest Officer and with almost everything at my command, I have found it absolutely essential to utilize these precautions in order to checkmate the machinations of various local oppositions, especially those of the subordinates of other Government Departments. So what chance of success has any outside sportsman got, when the District Officers are treated in this manner, except that of a most outside fluke, unless he adopts such precautions. It is for the want of these very precautions that so many sportsmen so often fail, working as they often are in complete ignorance of even the necessity for such precautions.

(f) A tiger should never be disturbed while he is still at his kill, for it is very apt to make him suspicious and to clear off out of the jungle at once in consequence. For this reason the kill should not be visited by the shikari too early.

Tigers usually retire finally from their kills about sunrise or a little before. In winter the sun usually rises at about 6-30 A.M., so that if the shikari who is going to inspect the kill leaves camp in winter at 6-30 A.M., and arrives on the scene of the kill (which should

not be more than at most four miles away) an hour later, it will usually be safe enough, and will enable him to return to camp with the news by 8-30 A.M., which is quite early enough in winter.

In summer the shikari should leave the camp before daybreak, even at the risk of disturbing the tiger at his kill ; but in the summer the tiger cannot afford usually to desert the locality so easily as he can in winter, on account of the scarcity of water and the intensity of the heat.

#### *VI.—The Beat (in detail).*

- (a) If the sportsman has good reason to believe that he will find a kill in the morning, he should have the beaters collected at his camp overnight. The work of collecting of beaters is much more easily and better done in the evening than at any other time of the day, for in the evening the villagers will all have knocked off from their day's work and will be found at their homes at which time if they are notified that they will be required for a whole day's outing on the following day, they can make all their arrangements, such as for the disposal of the work they had intended to do on the following day, the preparation of their food to be taken with them on their persons to last them throughout the next day which they will spend in the jungles, etc., etc. In this way they will come willingly and contentedly and look upon the outing as a pleasant and exciting change ; whereas if they are suddenly commandeered without notice in the morning, when they are engaged on their private occupations in their fields, etc., without being given time to make arrangements for the proper conduct of their own work, or for a proper supply of food to be taken with them, they will naturally be very surly and discontented throughout the day, instead of looking on the outing as a pleasure trip as they would otherwise have done, and unwilling work means bad work.

If a hundred men will be required, the best plan is to send out in the evening five orderlies to five different villages in the neighbour-

hood, with orders for each orderly to obtain twenty able-bodied men from the headman of each village, and after giving the men sufficient time at their village to make their arrangements regarding their food, etc., to return with them to camp overnight. In this manner it is very easy to collect a hundred willing men, whereas if the orderlies set out to do this in the morning they will find it very difficult then to obtain any men at all, for by that time most of the villagers will be scattered out in their fields or in the jungles cutting wood, etc., so will not be easily found, while in the evening each man will be at home in his house.

The orderlies who are sent out to collect men should wear some kind of private uniform, the more striking the latter is the more influence it will carry, and more easily and effectively will they be able to carry out their work. These orderlies should be particularly instructed to be very careful in selecting their men and on no account to bring any of the deaf, blind, old or maimed, for such have been the cause of many an accident in tiger-shooting.

If when having collected the beaters overnight in this manner the sportsman finds in the morning that there has been no kill during the night, he should at once pay in person each of the men collected half of the day's wages and dismiss them without any delay, and he will find that they will willingly come again on the same terms.

- (b) Previous, however, to the news of the kill being brought into camp by the shikari, the sportsman will be up at sunrise, and will see carefully to all the details regarding his rifles, cartridges, shooting-ladder, tiffin-basket, etc.
- (c) The beaters, one hundred men, should then be carefully inspected, and all the old, halt, blind, or any that may be suspicious-looking and undesirable should be weeded out and sent home.
- (d) The remainder should be marshalled in double rank, and each man given a gun-wad with a serial number, the date, a serial number and the sportsman's initials marked on it, to be given up again by them at the end of the day in lieu of payment.
- (e) Then forty of the most intelligent men, with good hearing and sight, should be specially selected to act as stops,

twenty for the right wing and twenty for the left, particular care being taken that none of the men selected for this most important and delicate work are suspicious persons, the Head Shikari being made personally responsible for the character of each stop selected as such, for being a native himself he is much more likely to know at sight whether a person is worthy of trust or not. To these stops for the present should be allotted the carrying of all the articles which are to accompany the sportsman's person throughout the day, such as his shooting-ladder, tiffin-basket, etc.

The hundred men should now be arranged in the following order, in double rank as a company in line :—

Numbering from the right, sections Nos. 1 and 2 of twenty men in each are respectively the Right and Left wings of the stops, each man with his load, if any, by the side of him ; sections Nos. 3 and 4 of thirty men in each section are the Right and Left wings respectively of the beaters.

Each of the four sections must be in the individual charge of an orderly, while the company should be under and superintended by a fifth or Chief Orderly, who should always bring up the rear when the company is proceeding in file, in order to prevent any lagging or breaking of ranks without permission at any time.

All this will take some time and trouble at first until the sportsman's personal orderlies grasp the idea and learn exactly what is required. But if the sportsman is up early he will have ample time to make all these arrangements before the Head Shikari returns with the news of the kill : while if the orderlies have already learnt the details of what is required, they will be able to carry out all this work themselves without necessitating the sportsman's presence.

The introduction of this rough preliminary discipline at the commencement will save an endless amount of annoyance and trouble throughout the day, by eliminating all unnecessary confusion and noise.

Once finally arranged, the four sections in line should be kept quietly seated in double rank, until the shikari returns with the news regarding the kill, no man being allowed in the meanwhile to break

ranks on any pretence, without the special permission of the Chief Orderly in charge of the company. The sportsman should then address the assembled company and promise them double wages in the event of the tiger being brought successfully before the gun, and severe punishment for any man reported by the orderlies for slackness or disobedience.

If the Head Shikari returns with the news of a kill, all the sportsman will now have to do is to jump on his horse and lead the way with the shikari before him to show him the road, giving the company, as he does so, the order "Into file, right turn, quick march," or words to that effect, when the section orderlies will at once turn each man of his double rank section to the right in file, and make them proceed one behind the other, keeping each man strictly in his place, with no talking in ranks permitted, while the Chief Orderly will bring up the rear in company with two of the stops carrying the long bamboo shooting-ladder so that the latter may not break the ranks of the men in front.

More luxurious kinds of *machans* can of course be used, but they are a nuisance and cause too much noise in being put up. The most handy kind for beating purposes in the jungles is an ordinary ladder made of bamboo of twenty feet or more in length, with a stout cushion fixed on one of the rungs at a height of about sixteen feet from the ground; if seated lower than this there is a likelihood of the tiger spotting the sportsman and perhaps knocking the latter from his perch when he is wounded.

But we are anticipating. The news of the kill has not yet arrived, so having placed his company in double rank, told off the sections allotted to each man his duty, and completed all other necessary arrangements, the sportsman will probably seat himself in an arm-chair in front of his tent and try to look unconcerned, though in reality watching eagerly in the direction in which the shikari is expected to appear with the all-important news. There is now a feeling of suppressed excitement in the air and everybody in camp is in painful suspense as to the expected news.

But this kind of feeling is only engendered when the knowledge exists that, if a kill is reported, the arrangements are such that final success is practically a certainty and the tiger is almost sure to be

brought into camp in the evening. The faith and spirits of our men have also been further strengthened by the gift, at the sportsman's expense, of a goat and some cocoanuts to be offered as a sacrifice to the local deity, and by the gift of two or three rupees to the local Brahmin priest in order to secure his prayers and blessings on our behalf. We now only await the arrival of the news. Will it never come ?

Some one suddenly shouts "*arta hai*" (he is coming),—at once there is a stir and a buzz of excitement in camp and speculation is rife as to the verdict.

It is true, and he is bringing in news of a kill too, for there is no mistaking old Dummeri's strut even at half a mile when he is bringing in news of a kill ; chest out, head thrown back, and arms and body swinging as if the whole place belonged to him—very different to the bent head and generally dejected appearance of a whipped dog which he adopts when he is bringing in bad news.

He arrives at last, striving hard to compose his beaming countenance to a state more befitting the dignity of the occasion : " Han hazur, gara ho-gya, arp ke ekbal se " (Yes, my lord, destiny has been accomplished, owing to the influence of your honour's good fortune). " Yes it is a huge male tiger, with a footmark like that of an elephant. I am not exaggerating hazur (seeing a smile) ; I have never told a lie in my life ! Yes, he is all alone, at least I did not see the footmarks of any other tigers. He has dragged the kill into some very thick cover towards the north. No, the water is to the south of the kill. Yes, he went and drank water at the pool and his footmarks here show that he again retired towards the north. I left the Assistant Shikari and the two orderlies to keep silent watch round the portion of the jungle in which the tiger is lying ; they will report the results on your honour's arrival at the scene of the kill. Let us hasten." This news is excellent, so I will now take the liberty of asking the reader to be my companion in all that follows.

Having everything in readiness we now start off at once, say at 9 A.M., leading the way on our horses with Dummeri in front to show us the right way, with the hundred men in double file coming along behind us, all talking and breaking of ranks being forbidden.

Besides these hundred men, however, we will also have ten well-trained private men of our own to help us in the coming operations, namely, five orderlies at present in charge of the company in the rear, three men keeping silent watch around the lair of the tiger, Dummeri, the Head Shikari, and a spare orderly carrying a rifle for emergencies just behind our horses. Thus we proceed quietly for about an hour, when we halt at a distance of about six hundred yards to the south of the scene of the kill, arriving, say, at 10 A.M. Leaving the horses and all the men in charge with the Chief Orderly to await our return, with strict orders against talking and smoking, we load our rifles (keep these now always at half-cock and safety for fear of an accident which would spoil the whole show) and proceed on foot to inspect the kill, taking with us only the Head Shikari to show us the way and the spare orderly to carry a spare gun.

We must proceed very quietly indeed and only speak in whispers, for this part of the work is very ticklish. The Assistant Shikari who is keeping silent watch from a tree in the neighbourhood of the kill now discovers and joins us ; and a whispered conversation ensues, in which he gives a detailed account of all that has occurred during his watch. His report is probably something as follows :—“ Up to half an hour ago the animals were calling on the southern slopes and on top of the little plateau half a mile to the north of us, after which the cries in that direction ceased, but were again taken up in the direction of the little dell to the west of the plateau, since when all has been quiet.” This may be translated as follows : As soon as the sun had risen sufficiently the tiger went up on the southern slopes of the hill, or on top of the plateau, in order to dry himself in the sun of the effects of the dew-sodden cover below, but later when he had dried himself and found the rays of the sun becoming too strong to be altogether pleasant, he changed his quarters again and came down into the denser cover of the shady dell, where by this time the dew has probably dried, and where he has made himself comfortable for the day and has gone to sleep.

Thus tigers are very fond of going up on to the slopes of the hills or on to the plateau above in the earlier portion of a winter's morning at which time they are generally lying right out in the open, away from undergrowth cover for the sake of obtaining the sun, and it is



probably because at this time they are exposed to full view out in the open that they like to be on high grounds from whence they can view in time the approach of a possible enemy ; but later on, when the sun becomes too strong for them in these exposed places, they seek the denser cover and shade, perhaps in some nook on the shady or north side of the hill side or in the denser grass cover in the valley below, possibly quite close to their kill.

The report so far is excellent, and we will probably find our friend at home when we beat for him.

On inspecting the scene of the kill our eyes are gladdened by the sight of the footprints of an enormous old male tiger ; the track is from the north, down the open bed of the nalla to within forty yards of where the buff had been tied, from whence he apparently for the first time spotted his prey, for here his footprints immediately strike off at right angles through a little depression in the sand, behind a patch of grass and then in the rear of a bush within twenty feet of the buff ; here the ground is deeply scratched in two places showing that the tiger had taken off from this spot in his spring on the buff. The rope is snapped, the frayed end of the broken piece is still attached to the root to which the buff was tied. Close by is a dark and wet patch covered with blue-bottles, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the blood of the sacrifice. This first sight of blood at once excites the primeval instincts of the hunter and goes to our head like the fumes of strong wine.

From this spot there is a broad trail or "drag" on the ground about three feet in width, along which the earth and stones are displaced, and the grass all lying flat on the ground in a forward direction, mostly smeared with smudges of dark blood with patches or pools of blood here and there on the way.

It may now be necessary to follow this drag to make quite certain that the tiger, being a large one, has not taken the kill further than they do ordinarily, for I have known a big tiger on a few, but very few, occasions to take his kill clean away over hill and dale for over two miles, and so upset all the calculations of the sportsman who had thought that as usual the tiger had not taken away his kill at most more than a couple of hundred yards.

We therefore follow the broad well marked trail of the drag, proceeding slowly and silently with our rifles in our hands (but still at half-cock for fear of their going off accidentally and spoiling everything) in case the tiger might appear suddenly and perhaps give a standing shot, when we would save all further trouble by knocking him over where he stands; but, as a rule, it is bad business to come across the tiger in this manner, for in such cases all the sportsman usually sees of the tiger is a flash of his tawny hide as he vanishes at full speed into the cover, probably to clear straight out of the jungle before the arrangements for the beat can be got ready. Therefore we must proceed very, very carefully so as not to disturb the tiger if possible.

After following this tragic trail through the undergrowth of the jungle for some sixty yards, we suddenly come on a spot under the dark shade of a dense overhanging bush where the tiger has evidently stopped to have a meal, for the ground here is strewn with splinters of bone and pools of dark blood covered with swarms of flies, on one side of which is a heap of dark-green matter neatly packed together, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the contents of the buffalo's stomach, which the tiger has cleaned out as neatly as any trained butcher.

But the trail of the drag does not stop here, which shows that the tiger has again picked up the remains of the carcase and dragged it on, probably with the object of concealing it in a better place where it will not be so easily found and devoured by vultures, etc.

The presence of the vultures, however, show that these precautions have failed, for the presence of the swarms of flies have betrayed the hiding place to the crows, who in turn have betrayed their discovery to the vultures. The fact that these birds are all seated up on top of the trees and not on the ground round the carcase as they would ordinarily be had they no cause to fear, shows that they have good reason to believe that the tiger is quite near the remains of his kill, and therefore liable to rush them, when he might kill half a dozen vultures with a right and left smack with his paws, for vultures are very clumsy birds and invariably have to run a few paces before they can rise on their wings into the air. That tigers do succeed in killing them sometimes in this manner I have seen proved on one or

two occasions, when I have found the dead bodies of freshly-killed vultures lying by the side of a tiger's kill. So it happens that the vultures have to wait their chance seated on the neighbouring trees, spending their time in quarrelling among themselves in shrill, grating voices something like that of a foal, as they bump against and dislodge each other in turn from their precarious perches, or skim round in circles low down over the trees peering down as if to locate the presence of their lurking foe whom they so much dread, while perhaps one or two of the more daring and hungry ones may venture nervously down to the carcase and taking a few hurried snatches at it, flounder up again into the air as if in a great flurry.

Seeing the vultures acting in this manner, we should proceed no further for fear of disturbing the tiger, but should beat a careful and silent retreat, if we had not already done so in the first instance from the scene of the kill.

However, in the present case, we will assume that there are no such signs to indicate the presence of the tiger actually by his kill, so we will, out of curiosity, proceed to inspect it, though it is now no longer necessary to do so, nor as a rule advisable.

The action of the vultures, however, shows us that the tiger is certainly not within a hundred yards of his kill, so we advance, perhaps another hundred yards, when suddenly we come in sight of a heaving, dirty, mud-coloured mass, dotted here and there with black, from which a portion now and again breaks away, which proves to be a vulture, the black ones with the red throats and white ruffs being the handsome king-vultures, while the grey ones are the disgusting looking ordinary vultures. Among the surging mass not a single head is to be seen, every head is buried deep in the entrails of the carcase, on top of which this disgusting mass is heaving, jostling, fighting, screaming and gobbling at their repulsive feast, individuals only breaking away now and again when threatened with death by suffocation.

As we approach, the disgusting bald heads and necks are withdrawn, and the mass begins to break up and individual birds take to lumbering flight, though some of the hungry ones on the outskirts having been hitherto denied a share by the crush, seize the

opportunity to rush in for a few hasty snatches before they, too, take to flight.

We find that the tiger has eaten the greater portion of both the hindquarters, the remainder of the kill being practically untouched, except where the vultures have been at work. Panthers, as a rule, except the very large ones, generally commence eating from the chest and fore-quarters of their kill; a tiger never does this. The vertebræ of the neck is broken, and the neck is pierced, both at the back of the neck and below, by large holes made by the fangs of the tiger, each hole being large enough to allow the middle finger to be inserted into it. The holes made by the fangs of a panther are mere pinpricks, which hardly admit the insertion of the point of a pencil, while the back and shoulders of an animal killed by a panther are usually, especially if the animal is a big one, much torn about by the claws, which is not so in the case of a tiger's kill, which is cleanly done.

If cubs are present, the hind leg of the kill will frequently be found to be broken, the idea being to disable the animal and then to play with it alive for the edification of the cubs, while the nose, ears and eyes will invariably be found much gnawed and torn by the cubs.

There is a native superstition regarding the direction in which the head of the kill is found to be pointing, which is supposed by them to indicate the direction in which the tiger intends to lie up after leaving it. I must say that I have very often found this idea to be correct, the reason probably being that the tiger always drags its kill by the neck, and as he usually drags it in the direction in which he intends to lie up, the head in consequence will usually be found pointing in that direction when the tiger has deposited it in its final hiding place.

Before finally leaving their kill, tigers usually make an attempt to cover over the top of it, with their forepaws, all the leaves and grass within convenient reach; usually this job is very carelessly and insufficiently done, but on occasions I have found the carcase so well covered with leaves and grass, that even the vultures had failed to discover it.

I have gone thus into detail in order to bring to notice a few points of woodcraft, which it is necessary for the sportsman to know.

If all has been well and the cover is thick, the tiger may be within a hundred yards of the spot where he last left his kill, or at most within eight hundred yards of it and in the direction pointed to by the drag. So in ordinary cases a line of beaters extending over a mile and a half with its centre in line with the position of the kill will be ample to cover the whole of the area within which the tiger is probably lying. A mile and a half is 2,640 yards, and sixty beaters 45 yards apart cover 2,700 yards, so that sixty beaters are ample for the purpose. We now know exactly where the remains of the kill is lying, and it was to make quite sure of this point that we followed the drag in the manner we did ; but sportsmen should only do this when there is no other means of locating with *certainly* the spot where the kill has been finally deposited, or when for some other reason there is a liability of the tiger having dragged the kill beyond the area of the proposed beat ; for, as I mentioned before, I have known tigers to take their kill to a distance of over two miles from the spot where they killed it ; but this is a rare occurrence and happens only when the local cover had been bad, water too far away, or when the animal killed had been too small and light, though occasionally I have known a very large tiger to take even a large and heavy kill for over a mile. To examine the remains of a kill in person is also a great check on the possibilities of treachery. Ordinarily, however, if the kill is of fair size and weight, such as a two-year-old buff in good condition, the tiger will not take it more than a couple of hundred yards, or at most four hundred yards, while often, I might say generally, if the cover is good, he will not trouble to take it more than forty yards. In such cases the sportsman will usually have no difficulty in locating the kill by the action of the vultures, or of locating the presence of the tiger in its neighbourhood by the cries of the wild animals, in which case he should never incur the risk of disturbing the tiger by *unnecessarily* following up the drag.

The next matter to ascertain is the spot at which the tiger drank water after his meal, and the direction he took after drinking. For this purpose, we then examine the nearest pool of water ; and finding by his footprints, in the sand here, that the tiger, after drinking, has again returned in the direction of the kill, all is probably well. But if his footmarks show that he has struck off in the opposite direction,

it may then be necessary to follow these tracks in order to make quite certain as to which piece of cover he is heading, and having tracked him thus into a likely bit of cover, to cast round on the further side to see that he has not gone out again, and to act accordingly. But it should also be kept in mind that after drinking, a tiger often goes off in the opposite direction merely to reconnoitre before returning to his kill. In the present case, however, we will assume that the tiger, after having had his drink, has again returned in the direction of the cover in the neighbourhood of his kill. We therefore return quietly to the beaters to hold a consultation with our maps, shikaris, and the most intelligent of the local men.

We light our pipes, if the wind is in a safe direction, and bring out our large scale four-inches-to-the-mile map of the locality ; with this on our knees as we sit facing to the north, we first proceed to put some questions to the local men regarding the local geography, in order to convince them that it is within our power to instantly verify their statements regarding the lay of the country and convict them if they are inaccurate ; thus from the map we ask them, pointing casually to the west, that if it is not a fact, that in that direction there runs a footpath from such and such a village to such and such a village, and that at such and such point it crosses or passes near, perhaps a water-hole, a nalla or hamlet. A few such questions, regarding a few features of the locality in different directions, will fill these ignorant people with awe and wonder at what they will consider the sportsman's supernatural powers of knowledge, knowing him to be an entire stranger to the place, and thus pave the way to the game of bluff that is to follow in questions put to them regarding the quality of cover in various directions, whether or not the water has dried up in certain nallas, etc., etc., which information is not to be found on the map. In this way much true and valuable information not marked on the map may be successfully extracted by the sportsman, for his informers will now be too much afraid to deviate a hair's-breadth from the truth.

From the information thus extracted, if we were not already previously acquainted with it by personal examination of these jungles, we are now satisfied in regard to the water, cover and the presence of the tiger therein.

The question to be decided now, at this consultation, is the direction in which it is most advisable to drive the tiger, that is to say, the direction in which the tiger of his own accord would most prefer to go, supposing he had a choice in the matter ; for, of course, it is always bad policy and also more difficult to drive a tiger in a direction in which for any reason he may be unwilling to go, for this tends to put him out of temper and therefore to make him unmanageable.

On finding himself enclosed in a beat, the tiger realizes that his peregrinations have led him into a trap, whereas he knows that in the jungles from whence he last came, he was undisturbed : so the probability is that he will prefer to be driven in the direction of the latter jungles, rather than in any other jungles where he might get into fresh trouble.

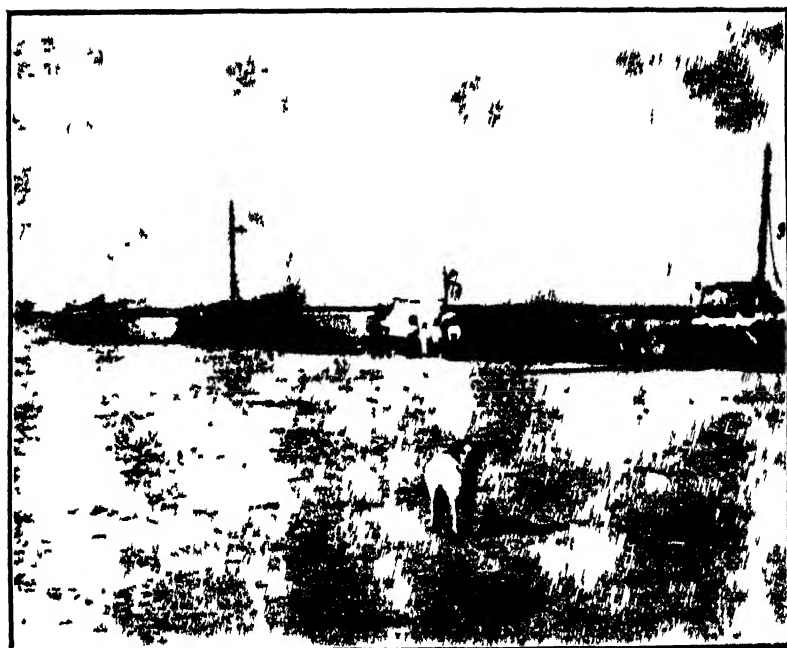
For this purpose, and also to make perfectly sure that by some unlucky chance the tiger has not gone out of the present jungles, we must now do some preliminary tracking, by casting round on either side of the cover in which we believe him at present to be lying up ; for it must be remembered that we are staking everything on this *one* beat of the day, and are leaving nothing to chances of having a second, third, and even fourth and fifth beats of the day as we read of sometimes in books, which I consider absurd in view of the confusion and disturbance which such haphazard proceedings cause to the jungles.

For this purpose two parties will now set out, one on either side of the outskirts of the area of the proposed beat to a distance of about a mile and half on either side, to search all the river-beds, footpaths, etc., for the footprints of the tiger which might show that he has lately left the block in question.

The Head Shikari, one orderly and a local man will go thus for about a mile and half round the eastern outskirts, while the sportsman with a few men will similarly skirt and search the western side. Should either party find fresh footprints of the tiger showing that he has left the block, it should immediately halt and send for the beaters, etc., to come up, for the beat now will have to be in an entirely new direction to that originally intended. When they have arrived, the beaters should be left as before on the spot to quietly await the return of the sportsman, who will then proceed to track up







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the tiger so as to make quite certain, in the first instance, as to where he is really lying up in order not to make any false steps necessitating second and third beats, etc.

After tracking him in this manner for a while, perhaps for a mile or two as I have frequently had to do on occasions, the sportsman will probably track him into a likely bit of cover where he may have every reason to believe that he is lying up. In such a case, he should not follow the tracks any further, but should skirt round it and see if the tiger has not gone out on the further side ; if he has, the tracking should be continued ; but if it has not gone out, the sportsman should place a trustworthy man up a tree to maintain silent watch, while the sportsman returns with all speed in order to ring in the tiger as quickly as possible with the stops and beaters.

We will, however, assume that both search parties have returned to the beaters without having found any fresh tracks of the tiger leaving the jungle, but have, on the other hand, found his tracks leading into the jungle to show that he came from the north, so these two points are now satisfactorily settled.

In the meanwhile the two remaining silent watchers, who have hitherto been keeping guard from the very commencement when the kill was first discovered, have been called in, and their reports also still further convince us that the tiger has not left the cover. It is now proved that the tiger hailed from the north, and having killed, he dragged the carcase towards the north and deposited it two hundred yards to the north of the spot where he killed it ; and having drunk at a pool of water quarter of a mile to the south of the scene of the kill, his footprints in the sand show that he again returned to the neighbourhood of his kill ; while the reports of the watchers show that he is probably lying asleep within at most six or seven hundred yards of his kill. Therefore, if the jungles lying to the north are suitable, that is to say, if the cover and water in the forests situated to the northwards are good enough to allow a tiger knowing them to be willing to be driven in their direction, we will conclude to beat him towards the north.

This important question being definitely settled, we must proceed with our stops by a circuitous route to the northward to select suitable posts for the guns.

The reader by now is doubtless arguing that by the time all this has been done it will be getting very late in the day. To this I reply that we are taking no chances by making any hasty or false moves ; if we take steps to make sure where he is before we beat, and if we find that he has left the cover, we track him till we mark him down, and thereby stake everything on that one beat of the day rather than hopelessly disturb the jungles by a number of haphazard beats. Moreover, if the beat is delayed till the afternoon, the tiger will have somewhat recovered from the lethargy of the heavily-gorged state in which he usually is in the morning and midday, when, if disturbed and forced to travel against his temporary inclination, he is apt to get out of temper and therefore unmanageable ; whereas by, say, 3 P.M., by which time he should be completely tied in, the effects of his previous meal will be wearing off and the tiger will be commencing to stretch himself and to move about in anticipation of the approaching night, a second meal and a drink of water—in fact he is now not so stupid and more willing to travel and therefore more “manageable.”

We will now take a bird's-eye view of the whole proceedings. The shikari started from camp at 6-30 A.M., arrived on the scene of the kill at 7-30, returned to camp with the news at 8-30 ; we left camp at 9 A.M., arrived at the scene of the kill at 10 A.M. ; by 10-30 we have returned from inspecting the “drag,” and held a consultation till 11 A.M. ; by 12 A.M. both the search parties have returned, and we start to select posts for the guns a mile and half to the northwards ; arriving at 12-30 A.M. we spend half an hour in selecting a good spot and by 1 P.M. our shooting-ladders are secured, and we proceed to put up the stops ; by 2 P.M. both the wings of the stops have been placed, and the shikaris are sent back to line out the beaters and bring up the beat ; by 3 P.M., just at the time when he is beginning to wake up and stretch himself into possession of his full senses, the tiger will be completely surrounded and the beat will commence ; and by 4 P.M. he will be shot and tied by his stockings, with a clear hour and a half of daylight left to see us comfortably back to camp.

It must be remembered that in the present description I am endeavouring to provide for every combination of circumstances which come to my mind, which I consider sportsmen are liable to knock up against, so the reader must forgive the unavoidable amount of

verbosity which the lack of ability as a writer necessitates in making clear and in driving home important points.

Each and every case will not necessarily require exactly the same procedure ; some, according to local reasons, will require less and some more of these precautions. Where, for local reasons, the sportsman finds he is able to dispense with some or all of these precautions and thereby save unnecessary delay, he is strongly advised to do so, for every moment's delay increases the risk of something unlooked-for happening to cause the tiger to move off, while in the winter, unlike the summer, it is usually safe enough to beat at any time of the day, the sooner the better in view of the risk of unexpected accidents, such as the sudden arrival of a pack of wild dogs, who hunt by day and not by night who would at once cause the tiger to desert the jungles.

After this digression, we must again return to the beaters from whence we are to proceed to select the posts for the guns.

The distance of the gun from the beaters is of course regulated by local circumstances ; it may only be a few hundred yards or it may be as much as a mile and a half or even two miles. The two sections of beaters, each of thirty men, will now be left in charge of the Chief Orderly and their two section orderlies, to await the arrival of the Head Shikari and his Assistant who, after having posted the sportsman and the stops, will return each under the guidance of a local man, one from the left wing and the other from the right wing of the stops respectively. In this manner the possibility of the beat going off in the wrong direction (as so often happens when the beaters have no one to tell them the exact direction in which the guns have been posted) is obviated.

Having again reminded the beaters of our promise to pay them double wages if the tiger is killed, we now leave them in charge of the three orderlies with strict orders in regard to all talking, making a noise and smoking, while we ourselves proceed silently by a circuitous route to take up our posts, taking with us the two sections of stops, each of twenty men in charge of an orderly. Besides these two orderlies we will now also have the other two orderlies, D and C, making four orderlies whom we will later place in among the stops in order to stiffen them and keep them up to the mark and to

report any cases of disobedience while our fifth or "spare orderly" (who must be a man who can be particularly relied on to keep perfectly quiet and therefore must not be suffering from a cold or cough), we will utilize by placing him on a tall tree in a commanding position in the rear of the guns, from whence he will be able to note as to what has become of the tiger should the latter pass on wounded; and as about eighty per cent. of such tigers that are killed in this manner usually continue to at least forty or sixty yards before they finally fall over either disabled or to expire, a man thus posted behind the gun is of utmost service in being able to tell the sportsman as to whether the tiger has gone on badly or only slightly wounded, or whether it has tumbled over dead and at what point, or whether it has crawled badly wounded under a certain bush and is lying there, and in this manner will save much unnecessary delay and many regrettable accidents.

Besides these men, the Head Shikari and his Assistant will also each have three spare men for emergencies, two of whom later on will be left with the stops if necessary, while the third man, who must be one having a good local knowledge, will guide the shikaris back to the beaters when the stops have been put up.

We will suppose that the duty of helping to put up the left wing of the stops devolves on the Head Shikari, and that of the right wing on the Assistant Shikari. We will now have in each wing 20 men, plus 2 orderlies, plus 2 spare men, making a total of 24 men in each wing to be used as stops, not counting of course the shikaris and their two guides, for they return to the beaters.

On the printed plan of a beat, 20 of these 24 men are shown as "stops" only, and include two orderlies, while the remaining four men are shown as "spare" stops and are marked "x" on the flanks of plan, who are dropped three or four hundred yards apart, as need entails, by each shikari as they proceed respectively from the extreme ends of the ordinary stops and the ends of the lines of the beaters, thus in a manner loosely connecting the stops with the beaters and ringing the tiger completely in before the beat starts.

But I have been anticipating in order to explain to the reader what we are about to do.

We proceed in a curve as silently as possible, keeping a sharp look out for any fresh footprints that might show that the tiger has left

the jungles ; however, we find no such tracks, and at length reach a point where we consider we have gone far enough to ensure that the tiger has been brought into line between ourselves and the beaters, and at the same time are at a safe enough distance from him not to be heard by him while putting up our ladders and stops ; for it must be remembered that in the present case we have no nalla or any other kind of natural lead up or to which to work, the jungle in which we are now working being one level, dense piece of cover with no particular natural features in it to be taken advantage of, which is the kind of cover which appears to puzzle the generality of present-day sportsmen. It is to show how this kind of cover can be successfully worked that the following is given.

Unless very badly pressed for time, the sportsman should never allow himself to be hurried in the selection of the post for the gun. Native shikaris are very fond of rushing sportsmen into accepting positions chosen by themselves by unduly pressing and hurrying the sportsman and thus not giving him time to think and select a position for himself. Half an hour spent on the spot in searching for and finding *the very best* spot in the neighbourhood is not time wasted, and will often save many vain regrets afterwards, such as : " Oh ! if I had only taken the trouble to look more carefully, I would have seen that much better place fifty yards in front (or in the rear) where the tiger stood so quietly, instead of having had that wretched bamboo clump in front of me which caused me to miss him by forcing me to take a right-hand shot, etc., etc."

The chances are that our local guide will lead us straight to a place which he will describe as the very best post for the gun, giving as his reason perhaps that it was this very spot that so and so last, or the year before, obtained a shot at the local tiger. In such cases refuse unconditionally to sit at such a place, for the tiger will certainly remember his former experience of it, and though he will be willing to advance up to within 150 or 200 yards of it, he will refuse to advance any further, and after lying down doggedly until the beaters have come up to him, will break back over them, perhaps killing some of them in doing so ; I have frequently known this to happen. In such cases the sportsman should ascertain at the commencement whether this tiger has been previously beaten in this block, and

avoid if possible beating him in the same direction a second time ; if this is not possible, then sit some three hundred yards *in advance* of the former post and thus meet the tiger before he reaches what he considers the danger point, and so take him off his guard—(*vide* account of the Majgaon tigress).

Again, in judging accurately the real situation and distances of small fixed objects, the eye needs the aid of an *even* standard of some kind to enable it to judge and measure correctly. In nature, such a standard or basis of measurement is formed by a *level* piece of foreground dotted over with a number of objects, the level ground forming as it were a kind of natural ruler with objects thereon forming the black lines on the ruler. Hold a pencil before your eyes and focus them so as to read the lettering on the pencil ; then suddenly look past the pencil at an object forty yards beyond the pencil, and the process of changing the focus of your eyes at once conveys to your brain the idea of distance ; but you cannot say, with any approach to accuracy, what that distance is until you cast your look along the level ground that lies between them and calculating unconsciously by the same focussing process the distances between the various objects or marks on this level basis ; that is to say, the level ground with the marks on it form the necessary basis for your calculation, without which natural ruler, no such calculation can be made. Thus, calculation of distance is dependent on a series of unconscious calculations of intermediary distances, on a level standard or basis.

Therefore, two things are necessary for these comparisons, namely, a level standard or basis, and objects or marks thereon, exactly as in the case of a ruler.

If either of these are absent, no correct comparisons can be made ; and therefore no correct calculation. Thus, on sea on a clear day, the island of Sark, which is seven miles from Guernsey, appears to be scarcely more than two miles away, there being no intermediary objects on the level water to enable the eye to form comparisons. The same cause and deceptive effects occur, in a more or less degree in looking across a valley or depressions on uneven ground, there being no level basis to form a standard for the eye to work on, in its comparative calculations. Moreover, lights and shades on uneven

ground are very uncertain and deceptive, and often make objects appear to be higher or lower, according to circumstances, than they really are ; a dark shade on the back of a tiger making it look depressed, while a bright light on it make it stand out clearly and appear nearer than it really is.

For these reasons tigers are frequently missed when standing on unequal ground, even at close quarters, though some people pooh pooh the idea of such being the causes of missing a tiger at thirty yards ; but I speak from experience, which has occasionally cost me dear, when I say that such are the causes for missing tigers on uneven ground, such as on the opposite side of a ravine or in a depression.

So it is sound advice never, if possible, to select a tree situated on uneven ground ; always choose a place where the tiger will be on the level ground when he appears. Remember that a tiger will usually come along the *top* of a bank and not below it, so that if you are posted so that a river-bed runs below you, the tiger will generally come along the top of the bank if there is anything like any cover on it, and not *in* the river-bed as native shikaris are very fond of asserting, unless the cover in the bed, such as *jamun* bushes, is very much better than on top of the bank. Also tigers *invariably* take every possible short-cut, so that in following up the bank of a river, which they are fond of doing, they always strike across every bend in the river ; in fact, across every such bend will usually be found an animal-track making a short-cut across the bend ; and it is usually along such animal-track that the tiger will come, so wherever possible the post for the gun should be selected on one of these animal-tracks, if the ground is fairly level.

In the present case, however, we will assume that there are no natural leads, such as river-beds, hills or valleys up, or to which to drive the tiger, the area to be beaten being one dead level piece of dense cover.

The verdict of native shikaris and most European sportsmen in India of the present day would probably be that it is impossible to successfully beat out and shoot a tiger in such cover. But the object of this book is to prove that this is not impossible, but a most easy thing to accomplish, if a little common sense is brought to work and traditional prejudices abolished.



After casting round for some 150 yards and failing to discover any natural leads, we select, as a post for the guns, a level piece of ground fairly sprinkled with trees, say, about 10 yards apart, with the ground under them dotted over with an undergrowth of bushes and clumps of grass, but not so dense as to run into each other and form a dense mass, that is to say to the sportsman, from the height of his ladder, they will appear as small isolated patches of cover with clear spaces around them, though to the tiger on the ground in among them with his foreground completely hidden by the bushes immediately in front and around, it will appear to be an even mass of cover, though the sportsman from his greater height on his ladder, being able to see over and around all the bushes below, will be able to see the tiger quite clearly, and that without being seen himself if he is dressed properly and keeps still, for a tiger otherwise rarely looks upwards. This reason alone is an overwhelming one in favour of always sitting up in a tree or other high place in tiger-shooting, whereas on the ground the sportsman would not be able to see the tiger until he was perhaps within kissing distance, which might possibly be at too close quarters for the likings of some.

Having found a suitable spot, the ladder will now be placed and secured against a tree so that it faces in the direction in which the right wing stops are about to be placed; by this means the left shoulder of the sportsman, seated on the ladder will then be pointing to the centre of the beat, which will enable him to avoid having to take an awkward right-hand shot, while it is always easy to swing round to the left.

The spot chosen should also, if possible, be such that the cover behind the ladder is sufficiently open to enable the sportsman to get in a second shot up to about sixty yards behind him at an animal that may have passed on wounded.

If there are two guns to be posted, I generally prefer to post them, so that they will command the tiger between them, letting them draw lots for first shot, so that between the two of them the tiger will stand less chance of getting off scot-free should the first shot miss him, which is so very annoying when so much trouble has been taken to bring him successfully before the gun.

If there are more than two guns, it is then generally better to place them on the best natural runs or leads, placing silent stops between them if necessary.

In the present case we assumed that there are only two guns, namely, the reader who I will denote as R, and myself. So we post ourselves so as to command each other, and R draws the right for the first shot.

Having selected our respective trees, the stops are halted and made to sit down quietly in line some twenty yards to the rear, while the ladders are being firmly secured to the trees; the ladders should invariably be tied firmly to the trees with ropes, for I have frequently known tigers when fired at to rush against the ladder, either accidentally or on purpose, when, if not firmly secured to the tree, the ladder will be knocked over and the sportsman precipitated on top of a wounded tiger.

When the ladder has been secured, a piece of rope about six feet in length should be secured to the side of the ladder on a level with the body of the sportsman when seated on it in his place, with the other end of the rope left loose for the present, so that when the sportsman finally takes his seat, he may pass the rope round in front of his body and secure it to the further side of the ladder, thus preventing the risk of falling off should he at any time in the excitement of a moment forget himself, or accidentally lose his seat or footing.

Our next is the most important and delicate work throughout the whole range of our proceedings, namely, the placing of the stops even though this question has been mostly, if not entirely, ignored by all the sporting books of the present day. Without the proper use of stops, it would be a hopeless task in a dense and level bit of jungle, such as we are dealing with now, without any natural leads of any kind, to successfully bring the tiger before the gun.

Having again reminded the stops of our promise to pay them double wages if the tiger is killed, we leave the right wing stops at the ladders to await our return, and proceed to post the left wing stops, namely, 20 men including the two orderlies, besides the four "spare" stops to be posted by the shikari and his guide while on their way back to the beaters.

Whenever possible the sportsman should invariably himself in person post every individual man of the "ordinary" stops of both the right and left wings. Native shikaris can never be trusted to always do this important work properly, even when they have been trained to it by the sportsman in person for as much as ten years, for, whenever they have reason to believe that the tiger will of his own accord follow some natural run up to the gun, they will invariably scamp the work of putting up the stops properly and securely, and as tigers on such occasions have a knack of doing the very thing that they are not expected to do, the results usually are disastrous. Time after time I have found some of my oldest native shikaris guilty of this, on occasions when from press of time I have been obliged to entrust them with the task of putting up one wing of the stops while I myself put up the other.

The duties of each individual stop varies according to his individual position in the line, so that the duties of each man must be explained to him individually, and above all *out of the hearing* of the other men, for if the remainder hear any instructions to one of their number, they promptly jump to the conclusion that the same instructions will in turn be given to them also, and thereupon make a point of committing these instructions on the first hearing so firmly to mind, that when their own turn comes they will not take the trouble to listen to what is being said to them under the impression that they have already heard their instructions on overhearing those given to the previous man; when at length it begins to dawn on them that there is a mistake somewhere, they will lose their heads and nerves completely, and in their general confusion of mind will cling doggedly to the only idea left them, namely, their first idea, no matter what may now be said to them, so that now nothing but force will make the recalcitrant relinquish them and listen afresh and to repeat correctly the new instructions. To prevent these difficulties, the sportsman and his shikari must proceed about twenty-five yards ahead of the stops, while the stops should be brought up behind in double file, in charge of the two orderlies, who should carefully maintain the distance between themselves and the sportsman, by halting the instant the latter halts, and proceeding again only when the latter proceeds.

In this manner the sportsman must proceed, in a curve, until he arrives at a tree where he considers a stop should be placed, and therefore halts, the stops and orderlies behind halting correspondingly. He then beckons to the orderlies, who thereupon send forward one stop alone to the sportsman, who will then explain to him in an undertone all the details of what he is required to do, and when he has finished the instructions, the shikari should again repeat to him word for word all the orders after which the stop himself must be made to repeat correctly all the instructions he has received.

After seeing him up his tree, the sportsman will continue to the next post, where the performance will be repeated, each man's instructions being given in an undertone out of the hearing of the remainder, repeated in the same manner by the native shikari who naturally speaks the language better than an European, and finally repeated correctly, also in an undertone, by the stop.

In view of the thickness of the cover, the first five stops will be placed only ten yards apart in order to prevent the tiger, owing to the silence of these men and the density of the cover, from slipping away between them unseen. The nearest man to the gun will be at a distance of 30 yards from the gun, provided the latter is able to command the view as far as that.

The duties of the stops have already been partly explained ; but it will be as well, in view of its great importance, to go over the whole ground again here in its proper place. As before stated, the amount of noise made by individual stops must necessarily decrease as the position of the stop approaches the gun, while, where there is less noise on the part of the stops, the distance here between these stops must be less in order to prevent the tiger silently sneaking away unseen between them. Where the noise made by the stops is greater, the distance between them can be greater, for the increased noise in this direction will be heard by the tiger at a greater distance who will in consequence be prevented from heading in their direction at all.

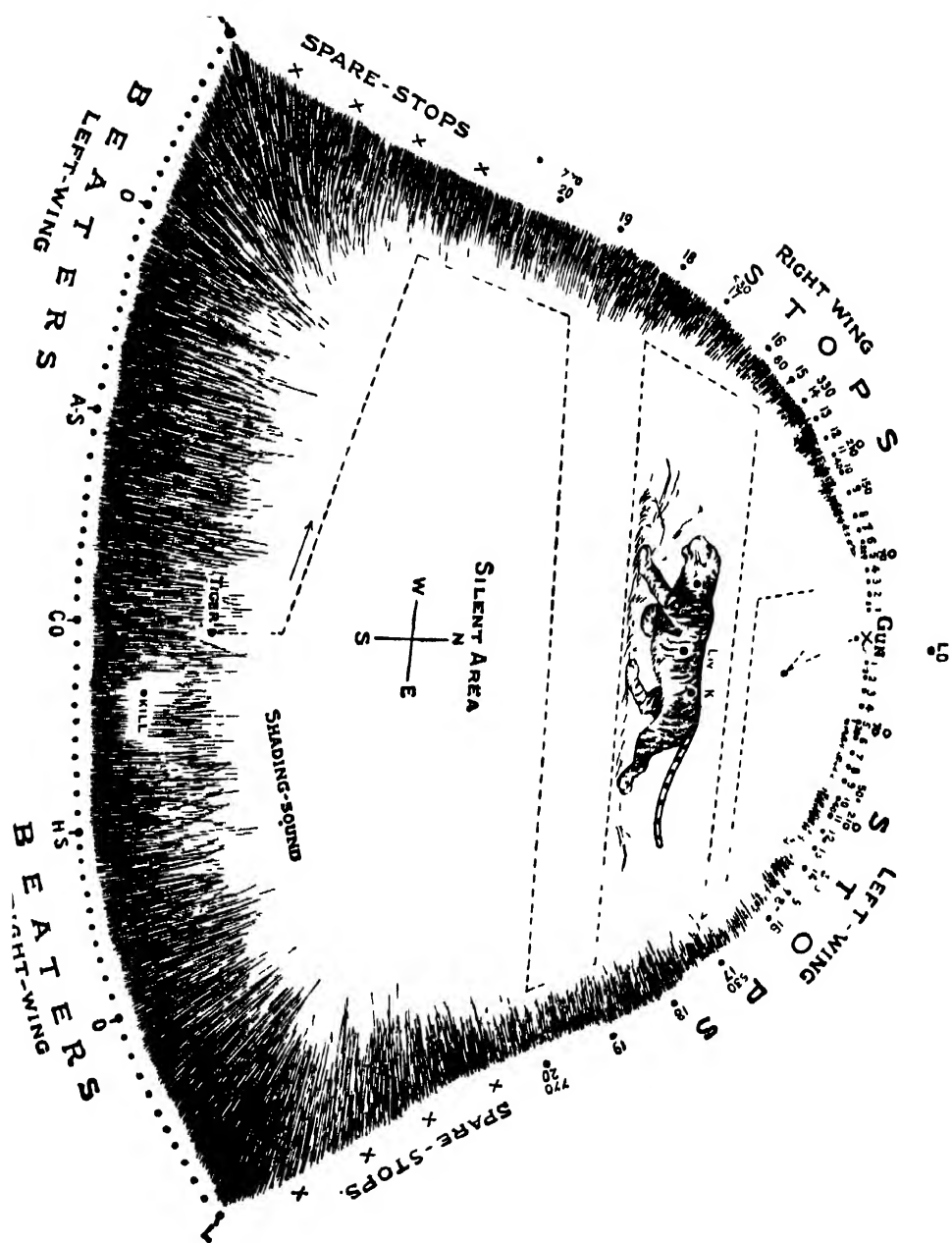
In order to explain the general principle, we will assume fixed distances, and say that the first five stops are placed ten yards apart, the next five twenty yards apart, the next five forty yards apart, and

the last five (of these twenty stops) eighty yards apart ; thus the last or 20th "ordinary" stop being at a distance of 770 yards from the gun.

We have assumed these fixed distances for the sake of convenience in explaining a general principle ; but when it comes to the real thing in the jungles, the actual distance between the stops and the instructions given to individuals will be governed to a certain extent by local circumstances, though adhering throughout in the main to the general principle, namely, that the stops will always be nearer together where there is less noise than where the noise is greater.

Under the circumstances assumed in the present case, namely, the beating of a portion chopped out as it were from an extensive dead level mass of very dense cover—*on the commencement of the beat* the various stops will act as follows :—

- (a) Stops Nos. 1 to 5 inclusive, that is to say, up to a distance of 70 yards from the gun should continue to remain perfectly silent (no matter what the other stops may be doing, this having been explained to them individually), until the time when they see the tiger heading towards them, when only they will give a low cough just loud enough to attract the attention of the tiger, but not so loud as to unduly startle or frighten him.
- (b) Stops Nos. 6 to 9 inclusive, that is to say, those posted at a distance of 90 to 150 yards of the gun, will commence to tap a branch very gently with the handle of their axe, but making a very slight noise thereby, not more than made by a pencil gently tapped on a table, and only sufficient to be heard at a distance of some thirty yards, but not more. Should the tiger continue to head in their direction regardless of their tapping, they must then use their voices to turn him, first quietly, then louder if necessary ; if the tiger is still obstinate, they must drop a cloth to the ground, and also throw stones (which every stop should be instructed to take up with him in his waist-cloth to be used in case of such an emergency) and shout loudly at him. These latter remarks—in cases of obstinacy only





on the part of the tiger—apply to *all* the stops, from Nos. 1 to 20 irrespective of their position, so I will not again refer to them.

- (c) Stops Nos. 10 and 11, namely, those posted at a distance of 170 to 210 yards of the gun, will also tap, but louder than Nos. 6 to 9.
- (d) Stops Nos. 12, 13 and 14, namely, those at a distance of 250 to 330 yards from the gun, will tap loudly and will also keep up a continuous conversation among each other.
- (e) Stops Nos. 15, 16 and 17, namely, those at a distance of 370 to 530 yards from the gun, will keep up a continuous though modified shouting.
- (f) Stops Nos. 18, 19 and 20, namely, those at a distance of 600 to 700 yards from the gun, will keep up a continuous and loud shouting.

*N.B.*—No stop will utter a sound until the beat commences.

From the foregoing it will now be seen how the instructions, among the different sections of the stops vary; and hence how necessary it is for the sportsman to be careful to see that one section does not get a mixed idea of their instructions by accidentally overhearing the different instructions given to another section of their neighbours. So when giving a man his instructions, it must be done out of the hearing of the others; and he must be made to understand that he must not allow his own actions to be influenced by the actions of his neighbours because their instructions are different from his.

Each stop should be posted by the sportsman in person, on a branch of a tree about 14 feet from the ground. He must explain to him the direction from which the beat will come—in this instance from the south—and must see him *comfortably* seated, facing the south, and must warn him particularly not to change his branch for a higher or lower one, or change his tree altogether for a more comfortable one, or sit with his back to the beat in order to be more comfortably seated. He should be told that two *sepahis* (orderlies) are also posted among the stops of each wing to patrol and watch them, who will take the wad number of any stop that disobeys any instructions or allows the tiger to break through the line.

Sometimes a timid stop, when placed on a tall tree, will, when left



alone, climb high up and hide himself among the topmost branches, from whence it would be very difficult, if not quite impossible, for him to see the approach of a tiger below. Another more thick-witted, will conclude that it is more comfortable to sit on the ground at the foot of his tree, so that when the tiger suddenly appears before him he will become so frozen with fear that he will be unable to make the sound which is necessary to turn the tiger, who will in consequence escape past him.

The sportsman has to guard against such eccentricities, and after making each stop repeat correctly his individual instruction, he should also be made to repeat a formula something as follows:—

- “ 1. I must not get down this tree and get up another one, or change this branch for a higher or lower one.
- “ 2. I must not sit with my back to the beat.
- “ 3. I will receive double wages if the tiger is killed, but not if the *sepahi* reports any failure of duty on my part. ”

The two wing orderlies should be placed at Nos. 5 and 11 respectively in each wing, for this is perhaps the most delicate portion of the line, where the silence commences to be broken by sound, so that the orderlies here can check those who are too noisy and admonish those who are not acting up to their instructions. They should patrol the line of stops until the time when they hear the opening shouts of the beaters, when they should each quietly climb up into their respective trees, and thereafter, besides performing their own parts as stops, should keep a sharp look out on the stops to their right and left, and, if necessary, quietly admonish any who may be failing to act up to their instructions.

While putting up the stops, as before stated, the sportsman should proceed in a *wide* curve, so as to allow the tiger plenty of room between the two lines of stops in which to roam about at will, until he is finally driven forward to the gun by the advancing mass of beaters. It is usually fatal to have the two lines of stops, one on either side of the gun, so close together as to form a narrow V, with the gun at the apex.

We therefore now take care to proceed in a wide curve, and as we proceed, we may occasionally come across an extra thick piece of cover or lead, through which the tiger may later on make determined efforts to pass. Here we may have to place two, and even more,

men together in the same tree, so that their numbers will give them courage to resist the efforts of the tiger, for in such places a tiger will often charge the position of the stops repeatedly with loud roars in his endeavours to break through, which is apt to scare a single man, so that nothing short of determined mobbing and stone-throwing by a number of men together guarding such a passage (generally a narrow ravine, a nalla or a narrow lead of particularly dense jungle, where for some adverse reason it was inadvisable to post the guns) will make the tiger relinquish his efforts in this direction. A white cloth or a piece of newspaper hung on a bush a few yards in front of the stops in such a place will often help them considerably in turning an obstinate tiger. When sufficient men are not obtainable, in the place of stops may be used a length of rope, hung at intervals with strips of white cloth, with here and there a rattle or a wooden bell; these ropes can be ranged out in the place of stops for hundreds of yards, one or two men at intervals being sufficient to jerk the ropes and so cause the rattles or bells to make the necessary noise. But I have never found this to replace human stops satisfactorily, being an endless nuisance in the jungles, always becoming linked up and entangled in an exasperating manner and refusing to work at the most critical moment.

However, an ample supply of newspaper should always be taken, for it is not only very handy for ordinary purposes in the jungles, but also comes in very useful at a pinch in beating, when placed on a piece of stick stuck into the ground or on a bush at a tight corner such as described above.

But the use of a piece of paper in this manner among the "silent" stops should be resorted to with the very greatest caution, for, there being no noise in that direction to warn the tiger, he will not be aware of there being anything unusual present until he suddenly comes up against it, which is apt to scare him to such an extent that in his panic he may charge it and knock it over, and then becoming quite unmanageable in his fright, he will charge headlong through the stops regardless of all they might do to try and stop him. I therefore prefer to use an extra man, if such is necessary, within about a hundred yards of the gun, rather than place a white object on the ground to be suddenly walked on to unawares by the tiger.

For this reason, when posting the stops, it is advisable also to warn them not on any account to leave any of their clothes lying about on the ground, or hung on a neighbouring bush, as they are fond of doing should their clothes have happened to become wet from any cause, such as by perspiration, dew, etc. I once lost a tiger in this manner, for the second stop from me had elected to spread, unnoticed by me, his cloth on a bush below him to dry as he afterwards explained, with the result that the tiger, who was quietly on his way to me, suddenly caught sight of it on rounding a bush, and away he dashed roaring through the opposite line of stops, paying not the slightest attention, in his panic, to their frantic endeavours to stop him. Another tiger I lost in a similar way, but on this occasion owing to disobedience on the part of one of the silent stops ; in order to be more comfortable on his branch, he faced round on it with his back to the beaters, so that he failed to detect the arrival of the quietly stealing tiger until the latter was almost under his tree, and then, in his anxiety to turn the tiger in time, he pitched his axe at it and yelled like a fiend, with the result that the tiger broke headlong through the stops.

I have detailed these two cases in order to emphasize the necessity for care in such matters.

When all the 20 stops have been carefully posted in this manner by the sportsman himself, a keen look out having also been maintained for the fresh footprints of the tiger should he by any chance have left the jungle in this direction, on posting the 20th or last of the ordinary stops, the sportsman should go no further himself. He is now 770 yards from his ladder, and will therefore be about a mile from the right extremity of the line of beaters when the latter have been finally extended. He will now direct the Head Shikari and his guide to return to the beaters, proceeding in a curve and taking with them the four " spare stops," with orders to similarly post these men as they proceed at intervals of about four hundred yards apart, keeping a sharp look out on their way for the fresh tracks of the tiger. These four men, on the commencement of the beat, will shout their loudest and so prevent the tiger, by this greater amount of noise from heading in their direction at all. They are marked on the plan as X.

All the stops of course have orders to sit perfectly silent, *till* the beat commences (unless they see the tiger trying to break through their line before) ; but on the commencement of the beat, each and every stop will act according to his individual instructions.

Having posted up all the ordinary stops of the left wing, and sent off the Head Shikari and his party to post the " spare stops " and to line out the beaters, the sportsman should at once hasten back to his ladder, checking and correcting if necessary, on his way back, the positions of the stops whom he has just put up, and giving them a few words of encouragement, or censure as the case may be, as he goes along. Hereafter the two wing orderlies patrolling will be responsible that the stops maintain their correct positions and perform their duties properly.

On returning to his ladder where the remaining men have been quietly awaiting him, the sportsman will at once proceed to post the right wing stops, in an exactly similar manner to that in which the left wing has just been placed, giving the same instructions to the Assistant Shikari and his guide with reference to the posting of their four " spare stops " while on their way back to line out and bring up the beaters. Thus a shikari and a local guide return to the beaters from each wing of the stops, and therefore know exactly how the stops are placed and where the gun is posted, so that there is now no possibility of the beat going off in the wrong direction, as so often happens in haphazard methods of beating.

In the right wing stops also, exactly the same as in the left wing, there will be two orderlies at Nos. 5 and 11, who will be patrolling the stops until the beat commences.

It is now 2 P.M., and it will be an hour before we will hear the opening shouts of the beaters, so we have plenty of time in which to select a suitable post behind our ladders on which to place later our look-out man, our " spare orderly " having selected which, we will bring him back with us to help in the task of unpacking our tiffin-basket, for this man is a personal attendant and handy at all work of this description. Having indulged our inner-man, we may then, if the wind is steady and blowing from the tiger to us, even indulge in the luxury of a smoke, for all traces of the smoke will have been blown away long before the tiger appears on the scene.

An European can always spot the smell of a *hooka* even when smoked by the natives in the open, and a tiger is not a whit behind hand in this matter, though I have mentioned that in my opinion he is a duffer in this respect as compared with other wild animals ; if human beings who are used to it can at once detect the smell of tobacco in fresh air, how much sooner will a tiger, who is not accustomed to it, detect it. I therefore can by no means agree with Mr. Saunderson when he says that there is no fear of detection, or words to that effect, in smoking at night when sitting up for tigers. Sportsmen should be very careful in noting the direction and character of the wind when they indulge in the use of tobacco in the jungles.

Having comfortably disposed of our tiffin and our smoke, our next care is to see that our tiffin-basket, etc., is deposited well out of sight, and in the shade, behind us, particular care being taken to see that these are so placed that the rays of the sun will not work round on to them at any time as the sun moves round in the heavens, or we may find, as once happened in my experience, that at a critical moment just when we are expecting the tiger to put in his appearance, that the soda water bottles in the tiffin-basket behind us are bursting one after another from the effects of the sun, and thus acting very effectively as stops immediately in our rear !

Having seen to this matter, we proceed to take our seats on our respective ladders, our orderly seeing us comfortably seated and secured by the rope, handing up our *empty* guns or rifles, and breaking for us any twigs or grass that may unnecessarily obstruct our range of view. When I say "unnecessarily obstruct," I refer to only such obstructions that can be readily removed by hand without making any glaring alterations in the foreground, for all wild animals are very quick in detecting such alterations and at once change their course accordingly. There must be no breaking or cutting whatever which entails any noise, a hand-saw being carried for the purpose of silently removing an obstruction that it is absolutely necessary to remove.

After this the orderly will proceed to his look-out tree 200 yards in our rear ; by climbing up as high as possible, the tree being a very tall one in more or less open surroundings, he will be able to

command a view to a distance of perhaps some four hundred yards on all sides of him, he will be able to call out to us and let us know what has become of the tiger should the latter pass on wounded. But he must be a man who knows his work thoroughly and, above all, one who can be trusted to sit perfectly quiet without shifting about or making any other kind of noise, for any such noise behind us might turn back the advancing tiger.

With reference to fire-arms, I have been a poor man all my life, and therefore could never indulge in an expensive or extensive battery. Nevertheless it may be conceded that, during forty years, I have had considerable opportunities for observing the effects of various kinds of fire arms in tiger-shooting, if not actually in my own hands, in the hands of those who have been with me. However, I have gone into this question in a separate chapter, so I will now content myself in passing with the mention that I have done the majority of my tiger-shooting with an ordinary twelve-bore gun, and a twelve-bore rifle, using spherical soft-lead bullets, with  $3\frac{1}{2}$  drams and 6 drams of black powder respectively. With this old gun alone by E. M. Reilly and Co., I have shot over 200 tigers, a large number of them on foot, without meeting with a single accident with it in my hands (except two near shaves), and it was not till I used a .450 express rifle to stop a charge that I got into trouble by being mauled; so I have good reason to be satisfied with my smooth-bore gun, with which I am accustomed to shoot birds on the wing, so that it comes up to my shoulder naturally and requires no particular taking of "aim" as in the case of a rifle. Moreover, one rarely cares to risk a shot at a tiger much over 60 yards in thick cover or should not do so; while at that distance I would undertake to hit a crown-piece almost every time with bullets from my old smooth-bore.

As I will not admit a companion in tiger-shooting who is armed with a bore, whether gun or rifle, the diameter of which is less than half an inch, in the present case, we will assume that I am using my smooth-bore gun, while R, my companion, is armed with a .577 express rifle.

On no account should any one be seated with the sportsman during a beat, for in such circumstances a native is the most incorrigible being under the sun, and is sure to betray the sportsman to the advancing tiger, either by speaking to or nudging the sportsman in

order to inform him of the approach of the tiger, the sportsman probably already having been fully aware of the presence of the tiger, perhaps for the last twenty minutes. A tiger rarely ever looks up, so if the sportsman is suitably dressed, he will rarely be discovered by the tiger, unless he *moves*. The excuse that a man is necessary to hold and hand a second gun is a poor one, for the second barrel is about all the sportsman will be able to get in before the stricken tiger is out of sight behind him ; or, if he has time to hand over his empty rifle and take over a spare one in time to use it on the tiger, it will only be because the tiger is so disabled by the first two barrels that he is unable to get away, in which case the first rifle could have been reloaded in time for the same purpose.

Therefore, never attempt to keep a second rifle with you on the ladder ; for in the excitement of the moment the empty rifle is almost sure to be dropped and come to grief, or in hurriedly grabbing the loaded rifle, that also may be dropped and so cause what may be a serious accident.

On the other hand, the sportsman might with advantage keep a loaded revolver, or a Mauser Pistol, tucked in his belt, for emergencies, provided it has efficient "safety" such as the latter possesses.

We have now nothing left to do but to await patiently on our ladders the advance of the beaters.

In order to understand the arrangements in connection with the beaters, it will be necessary to follow the movements of the shikaris whom we despatched, after we put up the stops.

When the Head Shikari, proceeding from the extremity of the left wing stops, having satisfactorily posted as he proceeds the four "spare stops" on the way, on reaching the beaters, he will at once extend to the right (to the east on the plan) the thirty men of No. 1 section of the beaters, placing the men at first only 45 yards apart, but increasing the distance between them if necessary towards the outward extremity of the line, in order to make this line *cleft in* as far as possible with the last or nearest of the "spare stops".

The Chief Orderly should be on the left flank of the No. 1 section which forms the right wing of the beaters. The Head Shikari and one of the two remaining orderlies should post themselves in the

line so that they will have ten men on either side of them (we are at present dealing with only the right wing of the beaters ; the left wing will be dealt with similarly, when the Assistant Shikari returns), and will be responsible for their proper formation and advance ; while the local guide, who has hitherto accompanied the Head Shikari, should be placed at the extreme end of the line on the outward flank nearest the stops, for he has seen where the latter have been posted and will be able to guide the outward flank of the line so as to cleft in correctly with the outlying stops.

In this manner the right half or right wing of the beaters will be complete ; in which—commencing from the centre (left to right) of the line—there will be the Chief Orderly, ten men, one orderly, ten men, Head Shikari, ten men, and lastly the local guide on the right flank, making a total of thirty men, besides three supervisors in the orderly, Head Shikari and the local guide, not counting the Chief Orderly in the centre, for he forms the centre pivot for both the wings of the beaters on either side of him.

When the right wing has been thus arranged, they will remain quietly seated, the orderlies patrolling the line in the meanwhile to keep order, until the Assistant Shikari arrives on the left after having put up the right wing stops.

As soon as he reaches the beaters, the Assistant Shikari will at once line out to the left, the remaining thirty men of the beaters, namely, No. 2 section, in a similar manner to that in which the right wing has been aligned ; placing himself on the left of the Chief Orderly but with ten men between, the remaining orderly being to his left again at a distance also of ten men, while his local guide will in like manner be on the extreme left of the line. Thus the sportsman's five private men will be within the line, with ten beaters on either side of each of them, so that each man will be able to supervise the five beaters nearest to him on either side, *i.e.*, 50 men, the remaining five men on the left and right extremities of the line respectively, where the work is not so delicate, can be looked after and guided by local guides posted there for the purpose.

When the line is finally ready, it should not advance at once, but should stand still where they are and shout all together for some five minutes before advancing—this in order to give the tiger, should



he happen to be lying asleep close by, time to wake up and to collect his wits sufficiently to determine correctly the direction in which silence lies and to make off thither accordingly, instead of waking up suddenly to find the men on top of him, when he would be very apt in his panic to break back over and kill some of the beaters.

However, there is little danger of this happening now, for it is now 3 P.M., by which time the tiger has recovered from the lethargy in which he was earlier in the day, so the moment the beaters commence shouting, he jumps to his feet, in full possession of all his wits, and listens attentively for perhaps a whole minute without moving in order to note how the land lies from the directions from whence the various sounds he hears are coming.

The first shout among the beaters is given in this case by the Assistant Shikari, as soon as he has completed the alignment of the left half of the line of beaters. His shout is taken up all along the line of beaters and by the "spare stops" adjacent to them; of the other or ordinary stops further up the lines on either side, on hearing the opening shouts of the beaters each and every man at once commences to act according to his individual instructions.

Thus, in taking stock of his situation, the tiger finds that there is a great deal of shouting to the south of him, and on either flank, to the east and west; while to the northwards all is silent. However, the sounds that he hears on three sides of him are a long way off, so there is no immediate danger, for he has plenty of time and, what is more, plenty of space, in which to make his plans for his retreat; so not being pressed in any way, he does not get flurried or frightened, but moves off quietly and slowly towards the north, stopping every now and again to take stock of his situation and to change his course whenever he finds himself to be heading in the direction of a fresh series of sounds which had been unnoticed by him before. He first heads to the west, but shortly finds that in this direction there is a line of sound barring his way; so he changes his course to the north and skirts along the line in the hopes of finding a silent break in the line, but, as the sound still continues, he gives up his intention of breaking out to the west and strikes straight across to the east. After proceeding some way in this direction without interruption, he becomes conscious that to the east also there is a line of sound

which bars his way ; so he again changes his direction to the north and skirts along this new line of sound ; but finding no outlet here either, he again strikes off to the west, but with the same results as before.

In this manner the tiger is gradually worked up to the silent stops, without getting flurried, for he has plenty of time and plenty of space in which to roam about at will. On appearing before one of the silent stops, he suddenly hears a low cough, which immediately brings him to a halt, and causes him to draw back, perhaps with a growl of displeasure, to retreat again for a few hundred yards, where he will lie down under a bush to try and think the matter out. Here he may lie for half an hour, until the advancing beaters again cause him to get up and go forward. He may again try one of the silent-stops on the opposite side, or he may go straight forward to the gun at a slow unwilling walk, halting every ten or fifteen yards to listen for some indication of these silent and unknown enemies of whose presence somewhere he is vaguely and indefinitely aware ; it is during one of these halts that he finally meets his fate.

Contrast the results of this method of handling the tiger, with the results of methods usually recommended in sporting books on this subject. During the course of twenty or more years of a tiger's life, he is tolerably certain to have been fired at some time or another, by pot-hunting native shikaris if by no one else ; he is therefore usually well aware of the meaning of a gunshot. So just imagine how this tiger would behave, if we allowed the beaters to use firearms, drums, "rumtolas, fifes and twenty rattles—all combining to make such a pandemonium of sound," or a "loud and piercing discord" that the "decent-minded tiger" would "charge at full speed like a flash of lightning" through all obstacles, whether beaters or stops, and make good his escape ; or, which is more than likely, he would be too afraid to move at all from sheer terror, so that he will "squat" or sit tight under some bush until the beaters are on and around him, when he will charge and kill some of them, and escape. In one book I see it stated that beaters should not advance in a thin line, but in "groups" who should make all the above fiendish noise for "self-protection" ; to which I reply that there is no danger to the beaters (except in the case of a tigress with cubs or a wounded tiger, who

should never be beaten) unless and until the tiger has been so terrified that he charges in a panic, or "squats," as they often do when they are afraid to move at all on account of the the terrific din.

To return to our beat. After standing still for five minutes and shouting, in order to allow the tiger to get on foot and choose his own line of retreat, the beaters will advance steadily and carefully, each man throwing stones before him and leaving no cover undisturbed on the way, which is liable to hold the tiger, in all of which and other of their duties they should have been individually coached by the section orderlies while the stops were being posted.

The three orderlies and the two shikaris with the beaters should each be provided with shrill whistles, with which they will from time to time keep each other informed as to the relative positions of their part of the line, in order to preserve a correct alignment.

As the advancing line of beaters comes level with each of the stops, that stop should descend from his tree and join in with the beaters, and as the number of stops thus added increases, the beaters should close in a bit towards the centre ; so that by the time the line of beaters has advanced two-thirds of the distance towards the guns, at which time the tiger is generally on the point of appearing before the gun, there is such a dense mass of advancing human beings behind him, that it would be a bold tiger, not otherwise unduly provoked or frightened, to break back on them.

Perhaps enough has now been said to give the reader a fairly detailed idea as to how the beat is arranged and brought up. We will therefore revert to our anticipations on our ladders.

At about 3 P.M. we hear the opening shouts of the beaters, which is at once taken up in a similar manner by the stops on the extreme right and left, while the nearer stops next to them commence tapping sharply, the latter noise dying down gradually until it dies altogether into silence when within about a hundred yards of our ladders. All this is satisfactory, and all we now have to do is to await immovably on our ladders the appearance of the tiger, who might appear almost immediately, or might not put in an appearance (especially if he has happened to have caught sight of the sportsman on his ladder) until the very end of the beat when the beaters are almost treading on his tail within twenty yards of our ladders, as

sometimes happens ; so never be in a hurry to get down from your ladder until the beaters have actually *passed by* the ladder, for the manner in which a tiger will appear is also influenced by the temperament of the beast and his former experiences in this line.

As to the movements of the tiger, however, we will have ample warning ; for all the animals and birds of the jungles are his sworn enemies, who for mutual warning make it a point of honour to betray his presence by uttering loud cries of hatred the moment they catch sight of him, and keep it up as long as he is within their view. By these means we can usually follow almost all the movements of the tiger within the area of the beat, though we cannot see him.

First a doe-samber sees him and sends her bell-like note echoing across the forests ; the cry is taken up by the sharper note of the cheetle, and added to by the hoarse barking cry of an irate old langoor monkey perched up on the top of a large silk-cotton or *sembal* tree, where he is using language apparently sufficient to make the tiger's hair stand on end. Further on there is suddenly a great commotion among a family of peafowl, for several of them suddenly rise into the air with a great clatter and sail away uttering their loud and continuous cries of alarm, though some others of their party, who have been taken less unawares, content themselves by fluttering up into the branches of the neighbouring trees and from thence express their indignation in loud and disjointed notes.

After this all is perhaps quiet for a time, when suddenly a pair of magpies discover the presence of the villain and thereupon they give him a warm ten minutes, circling round and round him and mobbing him with their shrill *char ! char ! char !* which can be heard distinctly at least a quarter of a mile away. However, in keeping with a peculiar trait of wild animals and birds in this matter, the magpies soon forget all about him the moment the tiger has proceeded out of their sight when they again resume their soft and sweet bell-like note so different to their harsh cries of alarm.

All is now quiet for perhaps half an hour, when suddenly our attention is called by a great increase of energy on the part of No. 10 stop on our right who has suddenly commenced to tap with increased violence and also to cough, which is then taken up soon afterwards by stops Nos. 9, 8 and 7 on the same side. This, however,

dies down shortly, thereby showing that these men have seen the tiger and have successfully turned him.

A period of silence again follows, until suddenly we hear a low cough on our left, given by No. 6 stop, followed by silence, and we know that he has seen the tiger and has also succeeded in turning him. Shortly after this we notice that a squirrel on a tree, about two hundred yards to our right front is greatly agitated, for he suddenly commences his continuous chirruping, which he usually only does when he sees something that frightens him, so we are probably correct in concluding that he too has seen the tiger.

Our nerves are now strung to a high pitch, so that with every rustle among the leaves in our foreground, we expect the appearance of the royal beast which we are awaiting. For an hour past our nerves have been kept on the jump by the spasmodic rustlings from time to time in our right front, which exactly resemble the noise made by a tiger as he slouches through dried leaves; so for a whole hour we have been straining our eyes and ears in that direction; at last we hear just one *kack*! and we lean back with a sigh of disgust, for the noise is being made only by a colony of those confounded rat-birds, commonly known as "the seven brothers," who are hopping about under the bushes and turning over the dead leaves sharply with their bills in search of insects; how many thousands of times these wretched birds have made a fool of me in this manner? I owe them many a grudge.

In the meanwhile the beat has advanced to almost within six hundred yards of our position, but no tiger has put in an appearance yet; he is probably lying down quietly under some bush, a couple of hundred yards in front of us, to await events. Suddenly the rat-birds, who have hitherto been scattered, collect together in a bunch as if by common consent, about eighty yards to our left front, and commence a most appalling mobbing of some object, with all the chattering swear-words at their command. At the same time No. 3 stop to our right gives a low cough. There is no more noise on the part of the stops, but the colony of rat-birds do not cease the din of their combined chatter, each one apparently trying to shriek louder than his companion; they shift their position on the bushes slightly to our direct front, and five minutes later a magnificent old tiger appears and

commences to advance quietly in our direction, but stopping every few yards to take a steady look over his shoulder and listen to the beaters coming along behind him, but he is not a bit flurried and is taking things very easily. He halts for a moment some fifteen yards in front of me, and for a time his gaze is fixed full on my face ; but as my eyes are half closed and I do not move a muscle, he takes me for a portion of the tree and quietly resumes his leisurely slouch in the direction of R, who has drawn the right for first shot—for which reason I refrain from shooting. When within 20 yards of R, the tiger again leisurely halts to listen over his shoulder to the oncoming beaters. R has been watching the advance of the tiger for the last hundred yards, and has in the meanwhile brought his rifle *gradually* to his shoulder without any jerky movement, and is waiting in this position for this final opportune halt of the tiger in front of him ; or it may be that at the last moment the tiger spots some slight movement on the part of R, but he is now too late to bound away in time to avoid the bullet which strikes him in the shoulder and rolls him over. But the tiger recovers his legs (R should have aimed at the hollow in the neck of the tiger, the hollow above the collar-bone in a human being, where the neck springs from the shoulder) and dashes past R with a roar, receiving the contents of the second barrel as he goes : the last thing that R now notices about the tiger being a peculiar “stiffened flourish” of the tiger's tail, which is almost invariably a sign that all is over with that tiger.

Seeing that R was morally safe to account for his tiger successfully I have refrained from helping him, so as not to make *too much unnecessary noise* for the behaviour of the two magpies, whom I can now see about two hundred yards in the front of me, make me strongly suspect that there was also another tiger in this beat.

I see R preparing to get down from his tree, thinking that all is now over, so I quietly warn him to keep his seat and be prepared ; after which I give three blasts on my bugle, which is the signal to the beaters that all is safe for them to continue the advance, for they all have had strict orders that the moment they hear the sportsmen fire a shot, every man must immediately climb into a tree, from which no man will on any account descend or advance again until the signal to do so is given on the bugle. This

precaution is essential, in case a tiger is wounded and goes back into the beat.

The beat now recommences, and comes closer and closer, until the beaters are almost within twenty yards of our ladders ; but nothing more turns up.

R commences to unload and prepares to come down, when suddenly there is a loud roar, and a large tigress, which, having heard the previous shots, has been squatting unseen in a bush in front of me, springs out and comes dashing under my tree. I aim well forward at her to allow for her pace, and fire ; and by good fortune the bullet strikes her in the nape of her neck and breaks her vertebra killing her instantly, though her impetus carries her dead body on in a series of cart-wheels until it finally fetches up with a thud against the trunk of a tree (*vide* chapter entitled " A Case of Nerves " ), having struck my ladder heavily on the way, so that had the ladder not been securely tied to the tree, I would have had a nasty accident. However, from our position on our ladders we cannot be certain where the bullet has struck, so to make matters quite safe, I put another bullet into the tigress, picking my shot ; but in the excitement of doing so, my foot slips, and I would have fallen and perhaps broken my own neck, but for the rope tied round me.

Now a few words in regard to "spoiling the skin " with bullet holes. When the skin is removed, take some of the sinews out of the fore-arm of the tiger and with this sew up those bullet-holes which you do not wish to be seen on the skin, taking particular care to start with a firm knot and ending with a knot equally secure ; then turn the skin over and carefully pick out with a needle all the hairs that may have been sewn up with the stitching, and then brush the hair over the part with a brush, and there will probably not be the slightest trace on the hair surface to betray that there was ever a hole in that part of the skin ; while also the stitching thus made will last as long as the skin will last. Now where is the necessity for the outcry of " Oh ! don't spoil the skin ! " Make twenty bullet-holes in it if you like and then treat in the manner described, and the skin will be permanently as good as if it had never had a hole in it at all. Yet how many fatal accidents have occurred, solely owing to the cry " Oh ! don't spoil the skin." I have on several occasions known tigers

through a jar on their spine to lie as if they were stone dead for a considerable time, in one case for over an hour, and then suddenly recover their senses, to either run amok among the men that surround them or, in the panic which their sudden resurrection has caused, to make good their escape. A bird in hand is worth many in the bush ; so always make sure of a tiger which you may have knocked over by putting another bullet into him, picking your shot if you can, with this provision, that if the beat is not yet over, rest content with one "picked" shot after the first shot, "placing" your second shot, if you are able, either in the neck or heart ; the blood welling up at the spot will show whether or not you hit where you wished ; for unnecessary shooting before the beat is completely over may spoil all your chances of a second tiger, should there be another in the beat, as in the present case.

My tigress, however, is now *hors de combat*, for we can see the blood welling up both on her neck and over her heart, so the beaters, who on the first roar of the tigress had whipped up the surrounding trees, now come down and help us down with our arms from our ladders. Remember always to unload all your weapons before sending them either up or down a ladder, but do not forget to reload them when up.

Our immediate task now is to look for the first tiger fired at. On inquiry, the look-out orderly in the rear shouts out that he saw the first tiger fall headlong into a bush, from which it did not again appear, so, if it was still alive, it must be still crouching in the same bush.

We are now dealing with a wounded tiger, so we must be very careful. The bush is first located, and then "ringed" by men up trees on all sides of it. The ring is then gradually and cautiously narrowed, the sportsmen standing by on the ground to guard them in case of a rush on the part of the tiger, as they climb from one tree to the other, their object being to try and spot the exact position of the tiger from their vantage posts on the surrounding trees.

At length one of the men cries out that he is able to see the tiger and describes his position to the others, who then have little difficulty in also locating him, and soon the tiger is being pelted with a hail of stones from all sides, which the men have taken up with them for the purpose. A number of large stones are seen to strike the tiger



as he lies on the ground and bound off without a move on the part of the beast. He is probably quite dead.

The men in the trees say that the head of the tiger as he lies on the ground points to the north, we therefore now approach him from the south, the tail end. Never approach even an apparently dead tiger with his head towards you, in case he should take it into his head to suddenly come to life and nab you.

At last we obtain a clear view of the beast, and give him one more shot behind his ear or his shoulder, to make quite sure that he is not shamming ; if he does not move, we will *first reload our empty barrel* and then advance, with our rifles still at the ready in case of accidents and pull him by his tail. Still no move ; so we pull him out by his hind legs and tail and drag him into the shade, and sit on him while we wipe our manly brows and the excited crowd of beaters stand round and admire us and the tiger ; our shikaris and orderlies then advance with beaming countenances and salaam low as they congratulate us on our success.

We then take out our pipes and fight the whole battle over again on the spot, our men listening respectfully to what we have to say, and when we have finished, they in turn take up the running and relate all their individual experiences during the beat. One man put up the tiger out of such and such a bush (probably a flight of his imagination this, but no matter—every one is in too good a temper to gainsay him) ; another man, one of the stops, saw the tiger coming towards him, and so on, and so on, all as pleased as sand-boys.

We then enquire how it came about that the tigress was in the beat without our having been aware of the fact previously ; here the Head Shikari has a say in the matter, and tells us as follows :—“While putting up the spare stops on my way back to the beaters, to my surprise I suddenly came on the fresh footprints of a tigress heading from the east into the area of the beat where I knew the tiger was lying up ; and as I knew there were no tracks on the western side to show that she had gone out of it, I told the beaters to be extra careful for there were now two tigers in the beat ”

The tape measure is then brought out, and the male tiger proves to measure 9' 7", and the tigress is 9' 1", thus both animals are a bit above the average, the measurements being taken between

two sticks placed respectively at the tip of the nose and the tip of the tail.

A strong superstition exists among natives that unless the moustaches of a slain tiger are burnt, bad luck will follow ; they also have great faith in the moustaches of a tiger for medicinal purposes, and will therefore invariably pluck them out and steal them if they get half a chance. For this reason the sportsman should at once, in the presence of the men, ostentatiously count the number of moustaches on each lip of the tiger and then make the beast over into the personal charge of one of the orderlies, telling him that he will be held personally responsible for it. Or, better still, he may pluck them out and place them in a couple of envelopes, marking the latter "right" and "left" respectively, for a competent taxidermist will be able to re-insert them on the lips, on the black spots from whence they were taken. This is the best way ; for, if not stolen, they are apt to fall out.

The two fore-feet and the two hind-feet respectively should be then tied together. Between the fore-feet thus secured two poles will be placed, and similarly two poles between the hind-feet ; four men then will be told off for each pole, two at the ends of each pole. A turban, not a rope, to prevent chafing, will then be tied round the tiger's stomach, and a fifth pole passed through the turban thus secured, to which four men will be allotted. In this manner these twenty men are ample to carry the largest of tigers, for tigers do not usually weigh more than about 500 lbs., so that each of these men will at most only bear about 25 lbs.

The remaining men are then counted (to see that they have actually been present at the beat and not slipped away quietly in the jungles to turn up at camp in the evening to demand their wages, though they have shirked their work), and are told that each man as he proceeds homewards must pick up a fair-sized dry branch and bring it to be added to the stock of firewood in camp ; this they will do willingly for it entails scarcely any trouble in the jungles, with the result that the pile of wood thus collected by eighty men is one of very respectable and useful dimensions.

We then make a move for camp, riding homewards at the head of a triumphant procession, with the tigers carried behind us. In the

summer, however, the animals must be skinned at once on the spot where they are shot, for in excessive heat, decomposition commences immediately after death, which loosens the hold of the hair in the skin and so causes it soon afterwards to come out in bunches.

On our arrival at camp, we find that the news of our success has preceded us, and we are met by a large crowd of villagers—men, women and children—who crowd round eagerly to see the enemy that has destroyed in the past so many of their valuable cattle, frequently kissing our feet and strewing our path with flowers.

We also find on our arrival that eight professional skimmers of the Chamar caste have already been collected in anticipation of our success. But our first duty now is to pay up and dismiss the beaters without unnecessary delay, for they would naturally become discontented if kept hanging about needlessly.

In all matters where the payment of money to natives is concerned, the sportsman should pay the money with his own hand to the man who has earned it, as only thus can he be certain that the money has been properly paid to the beaters.

The beaters should be placed in line and arranged in sections according to their villages, and the sportsman should pass down the line and with his *own hand* pay in small change to each man his day's wage (double in this case, in view of the tiger having been killed) in lieu of the gun-wad which the man will now give up.

Now a few words in regard to the rates of payments. Many sportsmen, with more money than sense, needlessly spoil not only the market, but also spoil sport by overpaying beaters. This policy is a very shortsighted one, for it lessens the sportsman's chance of success; for if villagers find that they can obtain much more money by habitually acting as beaters than they can by following their ordinary occupation, it stands to reason that they will not be very keen on permitting the goose-that-lays-the-golden-egg of their locality to be killed, namely, their local tiger.

I speak from the intimate and personal experience of a Forest Officer in such matters when I say that the class of men usually employed as beaters in jungle tracks (I refer in particular to the Central Provinces and to Mysore), in their ordinary every-day employment in the jungles, rarely earn more than one anna a day by

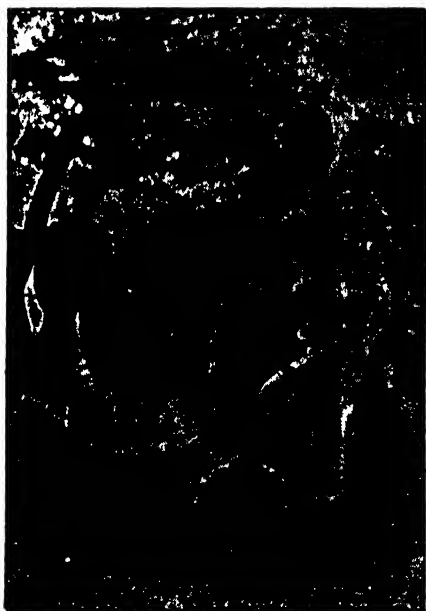
manual labour, this of course apart from what they gain from their fields. Once their little plot of land has been sown, the majority of the villagers are idlers for the remainder of the year, except, as above stated, when they earn at most one anna a day by doing odd jobs, by collecting wood, grass, honey, etc.

The official daily wage in the Central Provinces and Mysore is, or was in my time, two annas a day for each coolie, which is double what they would be earning otherwise, if they earn anything at all; so this is quite sufficiently liberal, while if he paid more, the sportsman would be cutting his own throat, as far as the chances of his success is concerned.

To return to our tigers which we have yet to skin. It should be remembered that the sooner after death the skin is removed the better—if possible before the animal gets cold; for not only is the skin then more flexible and will therefore stretch more, but the longer the treatment of the skin with the necessary ingredients is delayed, the greater will be the process of decomposition in the tissues of the skin, and consequently the less firm will the hold of the hairs be in those tissues. In the summer or rainy seasons in India, such decomposition sets in almost immediately after death; hence the imperative necessity at such seasons of removing the skin *on the spot* immediately after death, when also the treatment of the skin with the necessary ingredients should not be delayed an hour longer than possible, while during the interval great care should be taken not to expose the skin to the sun. However, in winter much greater liberties can be taken, while in the present case we have shot our tigers towards the evening, and have taken care to protect them from the rays of the sun, so we bring our tigers back with us in state to camp. Here, however, we should delay the skinning operations no longer.

The animal should be turned over on his back, and a start made by severing the under-lip at the centre, then straight down to the middle of the throat, chest and stomach, cutting only just through the skin, and taking care not to penetrate into the abdominal cavity. Then a cut should be made through the centre of the pads of the fore-foot, and continued down the fore-arms to the centre of the chest, keeping fully in the middle of the white portion of the skin there, so that equal portions of white will remain on either side of the cut.

The cutting of the hind-legs is a somewhat intricate piece of work, in that it is almost invariably badly done. To better explain what I mean, I will refer to the human leg : if left to themselves, native skimmers will invariably start from the heel (the pad), and after cutting up to the point below the knee, will continue straight on to the vent. Let the reader glance at his own thigh as he sits, and he will see that this operation would leave the whole of the skin of the inner portion of the thigh attached to the flank, thus making an unsightly flap (*vide* "B" in the attached sketch) which will have to be cut off later in order to preserve the symmetry of the skin, at the same time depriving a portion in the length of the skin (at "A").



FIRST MARK WITH CHARCOAL

To prevent this, the sportsman should take a piece of charcoal and draw a line from the heel to the under-portion of the knee ; he should then curve the line round (at the hock) to the knee-cap and continue up through the centre of the inner portion of the thigh (through the centre of the *white* portion on the inside of the thigh of the tiger) to the fork, giving, if anything, more of the white portion to the tail side of the skin than to the flanks. In this manner he will add to the appearances of length in the skin, and not waste it in unsightly flaps on the flanks which will have to be finally cut off and thrown away.

It will now be seen how necessary it is that the sportsman should see these preliminary cuttings himself. Great care should also be taken with the ears, eyes and lips ; the roots of the ears should be scooped out as it were close to the skull, or the lower structure of them will afterwards present too large an aperture ; the rims of the eyes must be severed from the bone with the very greatest of care, for if the rims of the eyes are cut by the knife or torn in the slightest degree, this portion being very thin, the tear will spread rapidly in the stretching and ruin the eye ; it is a delicate piece of work, so go gently and cut close to the bone ; the lips should be severed close to the gums, the thick portion of the lip should then be cut open from the inside by passing the knife between the mucous lining and the outer skin, without cutting the latter, so that the mucous lining or the skin of the inside portion of the lip can be treated and spread out as shown in the sketch. No bones or joints should be left in the pads, so these should be taken out right up to the claws ; the inside grisly portions of the pads should be cut away as much as possible, or they will rot. The vertebræ of the tail preserved, when varnished, with a steel core, form interesting walking sticks. We may now leave the remainder of the skinning to be looked after by the orderlies, telling them to see that no lumps of meat and fat are left by careless skinning, which can easily be avoided now, but give a lot of trouble afterwards.

Having seen to the delicate portions of the skinning operations ourselves, we then assemble our personal men, namely, the two shikaris and the eight orderlies, and distribute to them the rewards for the tiger—the details of which are given later. We also call up the local bunnia and give him eight or ten rupees on behalf of our camp-followers in general, instructing the latter to hold a “ panchayat ” (a council) and to obtain from the bunnia—up to the amount given him—such articles, by way of a feast, that they may decide on, which will consist of some country-liquor, sweetmeats and perhaps a goat or two. It is good policy to give one's camp-followers a reason in this manner to look forward to an occasion of success, for it makes them very keen to make searching enquiries among all the villagers among whom they have any dealings, or while travelling from camp to camp, so that the sportsman often obtains many a valuable hint in time in this manner.

We then have a refreshing tub and sit down to our dinner, after which we adjourn with our cigars and pegs to our roaring camp-fire outside, a fire some six feet in width and perhaps ten feet in height of flames, built over a round hole two feet deep in the ground and four feet in diameter which is for the purpose of proper ventilation of the fire and in order to allow the ashes to drop through and not choke the fire ; this is what the natives in the Central Provinces call a "dhuni".

Here we sit in our long arm-chairs and fight our day's battle over again, until the orderly announces that the removal of the skin has been completed, so we go and inspect the skin.

It is safest of course to peg out and treat the skin at once ; but the process is a long one to do properly, so that if it is done at night after a long and tiring day when everybody is feeling fagged, it is apt to be hurried and so done badly. But this is a bitterly cold winter night, with frost in the air, so we may safely defer the stretching of the skin till the morning, taking the precaution of preserving the flexibility of the skin by sousing it well in water. For this purpose we now take the skin down to the stream and wash it well in the water, thus freeing it of all traces of blood and dirt, and make it as clean as possible ; we then fold the skin double—hair outside—and hang it up in a tree, well out of the way of nocturnal marauders.

By this time we are probably feeling inclined for bed, so we adjourn to our tents and sleep the sleep of the just in spite of the noise which is possibly being made by our merry-making camp-followers. They have, however, deserved the occasion, so we give them full license to enjoy themselves in their own way ; nor will we worry those who may be sore of head in the morning. Treat your men like this and they will be ready to do anything for you.

In the morning the skin is again taken down to the stream and rewashed in the icy water ; after this it is spread on the grass—or other clean surface—hair upwards, and several men set to dry the hair with sheets or native "chadars," the sheets being changed for fresh ones as they become sodden. When the hair has been dried as much as possible in this manner, turpentine is then liberally rubbed well into the hair, after which large quantities of powdered black-pepper should be sprinkled thickly over the hair and rubbed well into it. The

turpentine and pepper is for the hair only to prevent insects getting at it ; for the preservation of the textures of the skin (not the hair) other ingredients will be used.

The skin must now be turned over and *all* the bullet-holes sewn up with fresh sinews taken for the purpose out of the tiger's fore-arm ; such holes as will be required to be seen on the hair surface can be opened out again only when the operation of pegging out and treating of the skin has been completed ; by thus sewing up all the bullet holes in the skin, the liquid ingredients, which will be applied to the smooth surface of the skin after it has been pegged down, will be prevented from pouring through the holes and thus unnecessarily wetting the hairside underneath. The skin is now ready to be pegged down.

It must very carefully be kept in mind that the ultimate shape (and size) of the skin depends on the manner in which it has been stretched in the drying process after the removal of the skin from the body ; if one leg is stretched crooked during this drying process, it will remain crooked ever afterwards ; for even the curers (though they may deny it) are unable to remedy such defects short of cutting up the skin and resewing it as you would a suit of clothes. If in the preliminary stretching the skin is made long and narrow, it will be returned from the skin-curers long and narrow, and so on. Therefore, the utmost care must be taken to make the most of the skin while stretching it in the first instance, and above all to obtain a perfect symmetry.

Many authorities say that a skin should never be dried in the sun. In regard to this I agree only in reference to the summer sun when, if good shade is not obtainable, a tent should be pitched, so as not to allow the skin to dry too quickly ; if pegged out in the blazing sun in summer the skin will be baked as dry and stiff as a board, and probably crack or break into bits—at any rate it would be ruined for curing purposes. On the other hand, I have not found that harm results from pegging a skin out in the winter sun, when it has otherwise been suitably treated ; while I have frequently known irreparable harm to be done by pegging the skin out in the shade at this season, for in this way the drying process of the skin is delayed to over a week, so that the unexposed surface below becomes quite

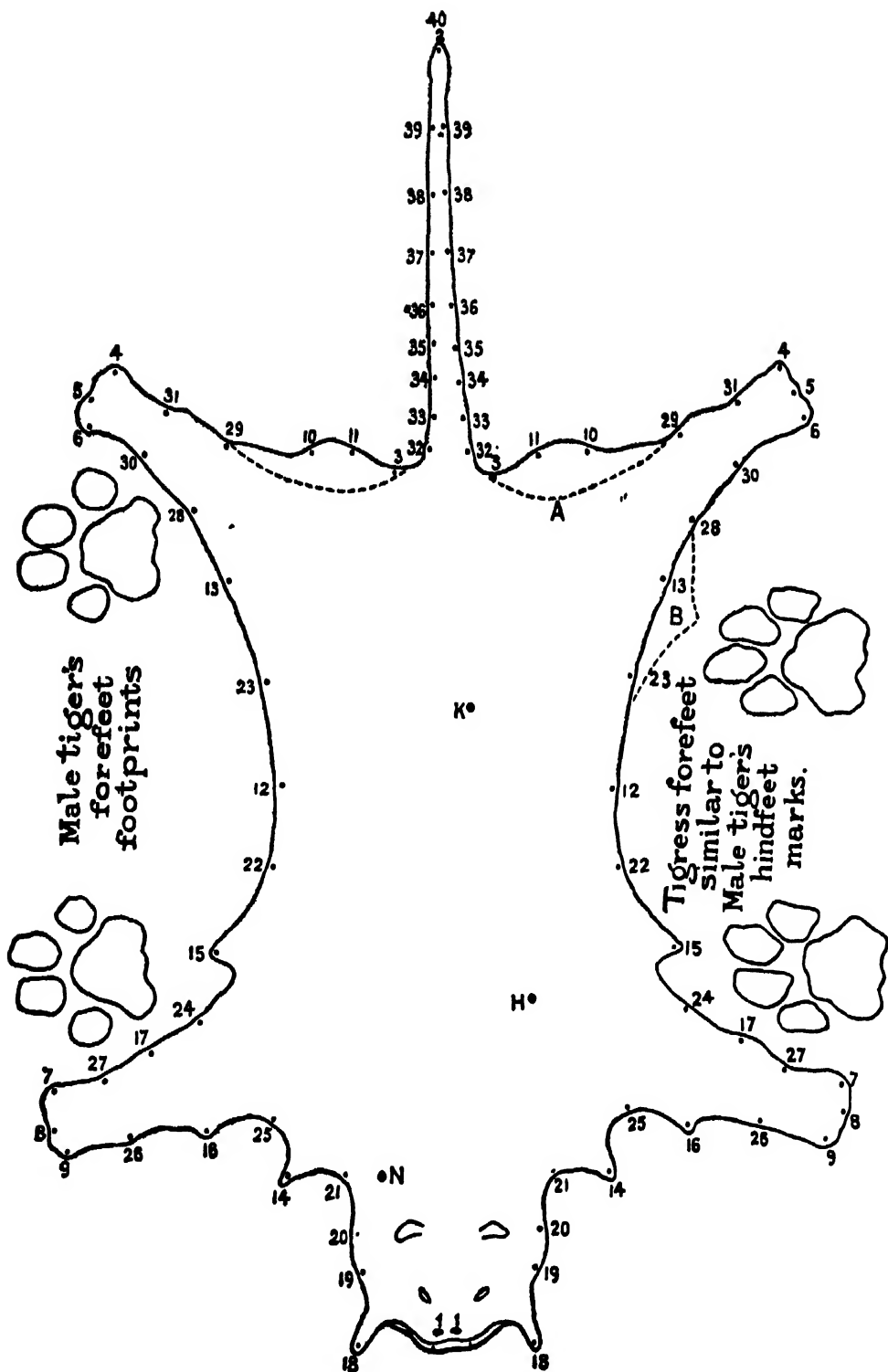


mouldy with the damp heat thus generated by this prolonged fixture, which loosens the texture of the skin and so causes the hair to come away in bunches, besides attracting and even breeding various insects which may destroy the hair in a few hours, while white-ants also in this time will certainly have worked their way up through all obstacles to the skin. The skin should *never* be kept pegged on one spot for more than at most four days ; usually in three days' time the skin is sufficiently dry to permit it being taken up, removed and repegged on a fresh spot without any alteration in the form or contraction on the part of the skin during the process.

On removing the skin in this manner on the third, or at most fourth day, the bedding underneath will be found to be quite damp, and that a regular dew is on the hair of the skin ; the latter should be carefully wiped perfectly dry and a fresh and copious supply of powdered black-pepper applied ; it should be noted that no ingredients that are liable to stain, such as powdered tobacco, etc., should be applied to skin that is wet or damp. The skin should then be re-pegged on a freshly prepared ground, and over fresh bedding. The pegs should not be finally removed until the skin is *quite* dry, or it will shrink and become distorted. But we are anticipating, for we have yet to peg out the skin.

The ground must first be prepared by being spread over with a thick layer of *cold* ashes, which to a great extent acts as a preventative to insects coming up through the ground to the skin, though, if given enough time, white-ants will build their mud-channels even through a layer of ashes. On top of the ashes should be laid a bedding of *coarse* jungle or thatching grass—the flat-bladed, sharp-edged grass with which the sportsman has probably become only too well acquainted on occasions when he has incautiously caught hold of some of it as he passes along in the jungles to find that he has thereby cut his hand perhaps severely. White-ants dislike this grass, for it cuts even their iron jaws, while they are very partial to ordinary straw, which should therefore never be placed under a drying skin if possible, for it attracts white-ants.

I will now refer to the attached sketch. Spread the skin, hair nethermost, on this bedding, some six inches thick ; drive a peg (No. 1) through each of the nostrils, then stretch the skin out straight and fix



THE WAY TO PEG OUT A SKIN.



the end of the tail down with another peg (No. 2); in doing the latter pull the skin out only to the length which you consider will at the same time leave sufficient amount for the breadth of skin. A well-stretched and cured skin of a ten-foot tiger, now before me as I write, from which the accompanying illustration of a typically stretched skin is taken, measures 11 feet 1 inch in length and 3 feet 6 inches in width; in curing of course the skin shrinks somewhat to what it was stretched to in the drying process. So if this be taken as a standard, any tiger that measures over 9 feet in the flesh, its skin when stretched for drying should on no account be less than 3 feet in width, as shown by the figures :—

$$10 : 3'5 :: 9 : x$$

$$10 x = 31'5$$

$$x = 3'15$$

And by the same calculation the skin of a nine-foot tiger should not be more than about 10 feet in length after it is cured. I remember seeing an extraordinary looking tiger skin in the shop-window of a well-known taxidermist in London which was apparently the admiration of a crowd of ignorant onlookers, for it measured no less than about 14 feet in length; on the other hand it was scarcely two feet in width, so that it looked more like a snake's skin than that of a tiger.

Roughly speaking, the skin when pegged out on the ground should not be more than at most 14 to 16 inches longer from the tip of nose to the tip of the tail than it was between these points when on the body of the animal.

In pegging out the present skin, we assume that the tiger in life measured 9 feet 4 inches; we will therefore now, in pegging down the tail and nostrils, stretch the skin between these points, measuring with a tape measure to 10 feet 6 inches; this will enable us to stretch it in width to about 3 feet 5 inches. Thus, roughly speaking, when pegged on the ground, the width of a tiger skin should be nearly one-third of its length.

Having secured these two starting points satisfactorily, and also fixed pegs (Nos. 3) at the root of the tail, our next care must be to get the four legs at correct angles to the body, for many skins are rendered unsightly by having the legs stretched either too straightly at right angles to the body, or at various angles. For this purpose,

fasten a cord to peg No. 2 at the tip of the tail and pull in taut down the centre of the body and tie it to another peg in front of the nose. Then similarly fasten two other tightly stretched cords, one across the root of the tail and the other across the neck (as shown in the illustrations) so that each is exactly at right angles to the centre cord ; then peg out the four legs, with reference to these two cords, as shown in the sketch—pulling and stretching out the skin now as much as ever you possibly can (for you have the length already secured) and knock in pegs Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7, 8, 9 on either side simultaneously. Thereafter, in putting down the pegs, follow the numbers shown on the sketch, always pulling the two opposite pegs simultaneously to the utmost.

The head of the tiger in the skin, which is a kind of a bag, is frequently spoilt in shape by being pegged out and dried *flat*. To remedy this, when pegs Nos. 21 have been secured, pegs Nos. 18, 19 and 20 should be loosened, and the hollow of the head portion of the skin stuffed firmly with dry grass not too tightly or the shape may become distorted, so as to make it stand up above the level of the remainder of the skin, particular care being taken to see that ears within lie flatly and naturally so that the cores outside will be seen as shown in the sketch. I should have mentioned that all the fleshy parts such as the ears (both inside and out), eyes, lips and pads (it is generally best to cut away the pads altogether, for they are useless) should be applied plentifully with alum, for without the free use and ingraining of such an astringent here, decomposition is very apt to occur in the tissues of those thick fleshy parts with the result that the hair on them will come away in bunches. Rub in alum first and arsenical soaps second, both in liquid and dry form, so as to regularly pickle these parts with it, the arsenic will protect it from insects. Having stuffed the head as shown in the sketch, the pegs Nos. 18, 19 and 20 must be refixed into the ground. The inner portions of the upper lip which have been opened out must also be well rubbed with alum and pegged out to dry. The skin is now firmly pegged out ; it only remains to be treated

First pack the whole skin round, all along the edges, with a small embankment of sand. This is to prevent the various liquids with

which the skin is now to be treated, from running over and wetting the ground around the skin.

The Chamars or skimmers should then again be set to work on the skin, to skin the skin as it were, and remove every trace of flesh and fat that may have remained ; this will take perhaps a couple of hours of hard work, when the skin should appear to the eye as clean almost as a sheet of paper. It should be covered with a layer of *cold* ashes (hot, or even warm ashes will make the hair fall out) which should be rubbed or kneaded well into the skin with roughish but not too rough stones ; the chemicals in the ashes—especially the ash of the Sarj tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*)—when combined with the fat or grease on the skin converts the grease into soap, which should then be washed off with water, the latter being mopped up each time to enable the operation with the ashes to be repeated three or four times.

When the ashes have been finally cleaned off with water in this manner, thereby also removing the grease in the form of soap, wipe the skin as dry as possible. Then proceed to wash the skin in a similar manner with a copious mixture of curds and alum ; alum alone makes the skin afterwards too stiff and dry. the curds prevent this by making the skin soft and pliable without at the same time loosening the grains of the skin which have been made firm by the astringent properties of the alum. Mop up, and treat several times with curds and alum in this manner. Then, again, wipe the skin dry, and rub dry alum well in with the stones, using it copiously ; then, without removing the alum, add large quantities of cold ashes, and rub the two in together in the same manner, removing and replacing with fresh quantities of this dry mixture as long as it shows a tendency to become damp under this process. When it no longer shows damp, the skin may be swept clean, and a thin layer of the same dry mixture spread evenly over the whole skin, which may then be left, and the sand around the skin may be cleared away.

In about two hours' time, however, this layer will probably be found to have become damp having drawn up and absorbed the moisture of the skin beneath ; it should then be removed and replaced with a fresh layer ; and so on from time to time, until it ceases to absorb moisture.

It will now be seen how necessary it was to sew up *all* the bullet-holes in the skin ; but when the treatment of the stretched skin has finally been completed, those well-placed bullet-holes which the sportsman wishes to be seen on the hair-surface of the skin—to show at least that the tiger has been shot and not poisoned—may be opened with a pen-knife by severing the stitches, when, with the tension of the skin on all sides, they will at once open out into neat round holes.

The skin should not be taken up under three days, by which time it is probably dry enough to retain its shape and size while being removed to a fresh spot and bedding, as already described ; while doing this the ears inside should be particularly dried as much as possible and then filled with dry alum.

All the alum used must of course be powdered. The arsenical soap must be worked up into a paste with warm water, and applied cold to the lips, eyes and pads, and liquid when put on the ears, both inside and out. A plentiful supply of arsenical soap and alum should always be taken on a trip such as this ; also turpentine. Sportsmen have two things to contend with : decomposition in the texture of the skin, causing the hair to come off—which is prevented by the astringent or binding properties of the alum which should be applied *first* ; and secondly, insects, which eat and destroy both hair and skin, especially in the fleshy parts, which is prevented by the use of turpentine and arsenical soap ; without the use of the latter, I have found that the ears are invariably ruined.

One point I have omitted, and that is regarding the tongue, which should be preserved, in order to be stuffed and set in the head, should the latter be afterwards mounted. For this purpose cut out the tongue of the tiger well from the back of the throat ; then make a cut from the back of the *lower* portion to not quite the end or tip of the tongue and so remove the outer coating or skin of the tongue, the portion at the tip being turned back and removed like the end of a sock from a foot. This skin should be freed as far as possible, on the inside of flesh, by means of a knife ; it should then be left to pickle for a whole night in a strong solution of powdered alum and water, after which it should be dipped into a solution of arsenical soap and then hung up to dry, taking care

MR. J. C. HICKS AND FAMILY ON A BOATING EXPEDITION



INDIAN CROCODILE—shot 6th January 1910  
Length, 15 feet 6 inches  
Girth, 61½ inches  
Expanse of jaws, 1 foot 6 inches  
Width of jaws, 18 inches.



N.B.—*Before going further I should like to acknowledge here my indebtedness in learning—since the printing of this book—a new method of tanning and curing skins, which has enabled us to tan at home to perfection the skin of the ugly monster shewn in the photograph over page ; as well as those of many other animals—both tanning and curing with hair on—including those of Black Buck, Nilgai, Pig, Jackals and birds. By these methods we lately cured at home, within a week, 55 Black Buck skins, turning them out almost as soft as Chamois leather and as sweet, at a cost of about 2d. per skin for ingredients and labour. These skins cut into black and white strips and sewn together under our supervision, now form a magnificent and unique carpet in our drawing-room, and is the envious admiration of our friends. These methods are equally successful with bird-skins, for within the last few days we have cured forty Grebe skins fit for a lady's cloak. No wonder we are pleased with our new acquirement, which is of the utmost value and importance to every true sportsman in the wilds, for how many good skins are ruined annually for the want of just this bit of knowledge, and have to be thrown away finally ; and the methods are so very simple, and the ingredients are to be had in every village bazaar at small cost throughout India.*

*The methods I refer to are those given in a new and valuable little book just published at the Muffasilite Press, Mussoorie, India, by Mr. G. H. Goutiere of the U. P. Police, entitled "Taxidermy for India and the Sportsman's Vade Mecum," costing U. P. P. only Rs. 3-3 per copy.*

*F. C. H.—22-6-1910.*

that a kite does not fly off with it, though it would be bad for that kite.

At night a tiger skin pegged on the ground should be protected from the dew and nocturnal marauders, by being covered up with an old carpet or grass, on top of which a couple of native cots should be laid flat, legs upwards, and the whole weighted securely with stones judiciously placed thereon, though a watchman should also be deputed to guard it at night.

When the skin is finally taken up it should not be folded, but should be conveyed flat on a native cot suspended on a pole carried by two men ; two or three skins, one on top of the other, may be conveyed in this manner, a string being fastened to the leg portions to prevent these from flopping about. I have frequently had three or four cots coming along in this manner in charge of an orderly in the rear of my camp procession.

From the tiger's body also, the two little floating or clavicle bones found between the neck and fore-arm, may be preserved and made into ornaments or charms, being considered as "lucky-bones."

The skull of the tiger should on no account be boiled as is some times recommended in sporting books, for by this means the whole structure is very liable to fall to pieces, cracking and breaking up, especially the teeth, which in a very short time after being thus boiled are certain to split up or break away in little pieces and so ruin the appearance of a head when set up, the head being toothless. The easiest way is to clean it as well as possible with a knife only, of course taking out the brain, and then bury it in a large ant-heap, and then hang it up in a tree for the wind, air, and insects to complete the remainder of the cleaning process. This may not be as clean a method as boiling it, but it has the advantage of maintaining the skull and teeth sound. I do not like putting it into a stream to rot—it is apt to be taken off by some animal or other.

The fat of a tiger is much prized as a cure for rheumatism ; it may therefore be carefully collected off the body of the animal, and after being clarified or melted, and skimmed, placed in air-tight bottles. The natives often eat the liver, as it is supposed to make them courageous. Many a useful friend among natives may be made by a present of a little tiger's fat.

With reference to the liver it is a popular idea among natives that the age of a tiger can be approximately told by the number of lobes, large or small, in the liver of the tiger. My personal experience is that a tiger up to three years of age always has three lobes to its liver, only once finding the exception to prove this rule in a tiger one-year-old that had four lobes instead of three to its liver. After three years they appear to grow one extra lobe in their liver for each year of their life up to about, as far as I can now recollect, fifteen years or fifteen lobes. At any rate, it is an established fact that old tigers have a far greater number of lobes to their livers than a tiger of three years or under ; this being so, there is no reason that I am aware of, why a theory at least should not be formed on this basis in calculating the age of a tiger. Apart from this, however, tigers show their age, chiefly in the condition of their teeth, being in old age yellow, worn or broken, and in youth clean and brightly polished, exactly as in the case of dogs. Again, in old age, the colour of the tiger becomes very much lighter generally—the cupid bows open out and the ends of the bow and the chord forming into straight lines, opening out further and further apart with age, until all the lines are far apart and much more faintly marked and thin—this is chiefly with male tigers. In young tigers, both male and female, the lines are broad and black, and close together, the cupid bows clearly and thickly set, and the ground work of the skin of a much darker shade than in old tigers, the latter as a whole being much lighter in every way. For the varieties of tigers see chapter on panthers, in which the classification of all the larger feline of India is given.

As pegs for stretching skins, a supply of some four hundred flat iron nails should be kept, the nails being about six or eight inches in length and about half an inch across the flat portion, with the heads turned down—the kind commonly used in India on walls for hanging up heavy objects. If these have not been taken, pegs of the same length may be made from solid young male bamboo canes, the thickness of a finger ; they should be sharply pointed and well rounded at the heads with a knife to prevent splitting. Small tags in the skin (not marked in the sketch) will of course form, wherever the pegs are put in round the edges,

which will be cut off when the skin is cured. The pegs should be carefully examined at short intervals, and re-hammered if found to have been drawn by the skin while drying, or the skin will become distorted.

The tiger's footprints shown in the sketch almost speak for themselves ; the male tiger's forefeet marks are always much more round than those of a tigress, both in the toes and pads ; there is no



MALE TIGER'S FORE-FOOT

mistaking the two. The footmarks of a tigress is an ugly mis-shapen thing, and much more elongated—especially in the toes—than that of a male tiger ; her hindfeet being even more elongated and misshapen than her forefeet, and are smaller. The hindfeet marks of a male tiger are very similar to that of a tigress' forefeet ; I can recognize the difference when I see them, but it is so slight that I am unable to define it, not having the photographs of a tigress' feet as I have of a tiger's

When moving at either a slow crouch or a walk, the hind feet of a tiger usually exactly cover the spot vacated by the forefeet, but crosswise—crosswise, because it stands to reason that an animal must have at least one leg on the ground simultaneously on *either* side to preserve its balance ; thus the right hindfoot takes the place vacated by the left fore foot and then same with the other two feet. In feline, of course, this is a provision of nature to aid the animal in

performing a *silent* stalk ; the eyes being over the forefeet the animal is able to pick the spots on which to place its forefeet where they will make the least noise, that is to say, to avoid placing its forefoot on a dry stick or leaf that might crack and so betray it ; there being no eyes in the rear portion of the animal to guide its hindfeet in a similar manner, it instinctively conveys the hindfoot to cover the exact spot that had been chosen for, occupied, and then vacated, by the forefoot, thus avoiding the risk of accidentally putting its hindfoot on a rolling stone or a dry stick which would make a noise. Thus a tiger usually leaves only a double trail as if it had only two feet instead of four, after the style of the trail left by a man



MALE TIGER'S HINDFOOT

walking, though the prints of the hind feet will usually be found overlapping slightly to the rear of the print of the forefoot, perhaps half an inch or more. It is only when the tiger is standing or moving fast that the prints of all four feet of the animal will be seen on the ground. These facts serve to show the manner and pace at which the animal was travelling, and also the temper or state of mind of the animal at that time.

The determining factors in the age of a footprint in soft earth or sand are dew, wind and actions of insects over it. A perfectly

fresh footprint has a very smooth, shiny and firm appearance about it with all its edges very sharply cut, upstanding and clearly defined ; the wind breaks down these sharp upstanding edges, especially between the toes, and gives it a generally rougher appearance ; the dew loosens the smooth firm appearance and gives it a minutely pitted appearance, making it altogether duller ; insects, small birds, mice, spiders, etc., of course, leave their own trails over such prints, regarding which commonsense conclusions must be made. On firm damp mud, or damp clay, footprints are very deceptive ; if it is more than twenty-four hours' old, it is often impossible to say whether it is only a day and half old or a month old ; if it is under twenty-four hours' old, it can usually be recognized as such by its more shiny appearance, which afterwards becomes dulled by the action of the dew and wind.

We have disposed of the matters referred to in the sketch. We will now consider the question which is of vital importance to sportsmen of moderate means, namely, what our tiger has actually cost us, apart from ordinary living expenses which have to be met, no matter where the sportsman may be. To show that this is not such a ruinous pursuit or out of the reach of sportsmen of moderate means if carried out on commonsense methods is the object with which this book has been written.

I have sometimes heard of such absurd statements as each tiger that is shot costing the sportsman from £100 to £200 per tiger, or Rs. 3,000 per tiger—the cost of a motor-car !

In the present case we have done everything practically off our own bat, and done it ourselves in person ; so there is no need to pay exorbitantly to any one, nor under these circumstances will any one expect us to do so. It is sufficient to pay the hired beaters their understood local wage, and whether we will pay a small extra tip to our personal servants, who receive fixed salaries for the work for which they are enlisted, remains entirely at our own pleasure, and is not a right.

In the present case, in view of the success, and as an inducement to obtain like successes in future, we will give the following rewards, including double wages to the beaters and other incidental expenses in encompassing the death of the tiger :—

					Rs.
(a)	Head Shikari	..	.	..	10
(b)	Assistant Shikari	..	..	..	5
(c)	Chief Orderly	..	..	..	4
(d)	Seven orderlies, @ Rs. 3 each	..	..	..	21
(e)	Two local men, who also tend to the buffs, @ Rs. 2	..			4
(f)	108 beaters and stops, @ 4 annas each	..			27
(g)	For local wood-god one goat @ 12 annas, and 4 annas in ghee, cocoanuts and flowers	..	..	..	1
(h)	For prayers of local Brahman priest	..		..	2
(i)	For, say, 4 buffs killed for each tiger shot, @ Rs. 4 per buff				16
(j)	For feast to camp followers	..	..	..	10
					— £ s. d.
	Total	..			100 = 6 13 4

This is what our tiger actually costs us. Against this the sportsman may, if he wishes—and there are very few that don't in the Central Provinces—draw a reward from Government the sum of Rs. 50 for each tiger shot; the skin of the tiger, uncured, is also worth, in the open market if not to the sportsman, at the very least Rs. 100, if not Rs. 150. Therefore, in so far from losing in actual hard cash, we find ourselves the gainers in actual hard cash by Rs. 100. So people need not be so very afraid to go in for tiger-shooting on the score of expense if they work on the common-sense methods described.

Before closing this chapter, I will give a few random notes that may be of use.

Remember, that jungle-dogs hunt entirely by day and not by night, hence the necessity of bringing in the buffs at daylight, when they have been tied out in the jungles overnight. Tigers dislike jungle-dogs and invariably clear out of the jungle where they are, if for no other reason than that the dogs soon drive out all other game from the jungle, so that the tigers have nothing to feed on. I have frequently been told by natives of instances of jungle-dogs having actually killed and eaten tigers, and in one case of a tigress having climbed a sapling in order to escape from the dogs. I myself have frequently seen places, where the tracks on the ground undoubtedly

showed that a tiger had been kept bailed up by jungle-dogs for a considerable time ; the blood-marks on these places may have been from the tiger, or from the dogs that he killed ; whether the latter had been eventually eaten by the tiger, or by the other dogs after the tiger had made off, I could not determine. Jungle-dogs when in large numbers are very bold, and in such cases sometimes effect to ignore the presence of human beings, merely trotting by slowly or stop to take an impudent stare, but they very rarely, if ever, presume to attack human beings, unless they have very small cubs, when even a pair of them will fiercely attack, or at least make serious demonstrations, until the cubs have got clear. It is advisable not to try for tigers in jungles where there are traces of jungle-dogs.

The presence of a tiger in a jungle can often be detected by the marks of their claws on soft-barked trees, which they scratch, often habitually the same tree periodically, in order to clean their claws. Also tigers, like cats, are very particular to cover up their droppings by scratching the earth over it, so that long scratches, several feet in length, will generally be found on the side of every favourite nightly promenade. On all ordinary occasions tigers keep their claws drawn up well within their sheaths, and never show in their tracks, except for the first two bounds after the moment they have been fired at. If they have been missed, the claws will be again drawn up into the sheaths after the first two bounds, for to keep them unnaturally extended jars their feet as well as spoils their claws ; if, however, they have been wounded, in their pain they keep their claws extended for a much longer period as they bound along—perhaps for a hundred yards—thus leaving over this distance a series of deep and widely spread claw-marks in the ground they have passed over—a sure sign of a serious hit.

The character of the blood tracks will often indicate the nature of the wound : if light and frothy, it is a lung shot ; if dark and clotty, it is probably a liver shot ; if there are lumps of fat on the trail, it is certain to be a stomach shot ; if the blood is only thin and light coloured, it is probably an insignificant wound such as through the fleshy portion of one of the limbs, or a superficial wound only ; if splinters of bone are found, it is a limb only that is probably broken. The liver shot generally proves fatal within at most four hundred yards



and within half an hour, the animal being choked with blood ; the same result often occurs when the paunch is broken, the food coming up into the tiger's mouth and choking him--this has been my experience, though I have heard it denied. If the lung only is damaged, the animal generally escapes altogether from the ken of the sportsman, though it will probably die eventually many miles away. If a stomach shot, when the entrails are broken, leaving bits of fat on the trail, the beast will almost invariably lie down within four to six hundred yards and get violently sick ; if now left undisturbed, it will remain quite close by and die within twelve hours ; but if pressed immediately after receiving the wound, it will travel for many miles and so probably be lost altogether. The height of the wound can be told by the height of the blood-marks on the various objects passed or brushed. If there is a double trail of blood on either side of the track, it shows that the bullet has passed through the body and out again on the further side. If a wounded tiger gets sick, and has not been disturbed for twelve hours, it will usually be found stone dead within at most four hundred yards of the spot where it first got sick, though it will probably vomit again several times at intervals of sixty to eighty yards. Vomiting is a sure sign of a fatal wound.

When a wounded tiger is aware that it is being pursued, it often has an awkward trick of doubling back on its own trail and then hiding behind some cover on one side of it and awaiting his pursuers, who will thus be taken unawares in the flank while passing along the trail. Make it an unalterable rule never to follow a wounded feline *uphill* ; always work round and get above it on to the highest point. Use buffs or dogs when following wounded feline. However, it is best to do away with the necessity of having to follow wounded animals at all, by placing your shot properly in the first instance. I never shoot at the head if it can be avoided, for it is too uncertain ; the brain is a very small mark situated right at the top and back portion of the tiger's skull, where, if the bullet strikes on the convex portion of the skull, it is certain to glance off without penetrating it in the least. To prove this, let the sportsman take an empty *chatty* or earthen pot, and having reversed it with the round portion upwards (on a level with the gun) shoot so that the bullet will strike on

the convex portion, it will be found that though the bullet struck the fragile object, it has not pierced or even broken it, but has simply run round the curve, leaving only a white mark and then glanced harmlessly off. Moreover, in another chapter at the end of this book, proof will be found of a case in which a tiger had his brains knocked out on to the ground by a bullet, and yet lived for over twelve hours and went over two miles. Of all I like the neck-shot (N—see both sketches) the best, to which the tiger collapses in a heap on the spot, without even a roar, simply falling forward on to his knees and nose with a gurgling sob; but aim *low* in the neck. In firing at the heart, wait for the elbow to be extended well forwards, for it might intercept and deflect the bullet, which, if it be an explosive, also may only explode externally on the bone. If owing to any obstacle being in the way, only the rear half of the tiger is visible, the kidney-shot (K—see sketch) will usually be fatal on the spot (especially when a shell is used), or at most he will fall over dead within eighty yards. Panthers, as a rule, stand a great deal more lead than tigers, though on occasions a particular tiger may be found with stamina similar to panthers and takes a lot of killing.

When on the ground, never fire at dangerous game as long as they have their head pointed in your direction—don't do as I have done, but do as I say—wait till they turn and begin to move in another direction before you fire, for on being struck such animals always bound straightforward in the direction in which they happen to have their heads pointed at the moment, so that if you are standing in their path, you are certain to be picked up during their rush and severely mauled. Also never fire at either bears, panthers or tigers that are above you, for in such cases they invariably charge down at their aggressor when probably nothing will be able to prevent their impetus making good their charge.

The heads of these dangerous game when charging stand about eighteen inches from the ground, and in a charge are very apt to be missed by being fired *over* unless the sportsman has previously practised with his rifle at small objects at this height at short distances. In practising for the first time in this manner and at this depressed angle, he will probably find that he will be thrown considerably off his balance and that the shots are going very high when quickly fired.

By short distance I mean from ten feet to twenty yards—the distance of such rushes.

There is a great deal of “bluff” in a tiger’s composition, both in his terrifying noise and in his charge, so that if the sportsman stands firm and faces his demonstration coolly, the tiger very much oftener than not will fail to make good his charge by pulling up short half way and turning tail, thus giving the required opportunity for a safe and certain shot. But if the man instead exhibits his weakness and fear by himself turning tail, there is no earthly hope for him, for the tiger will then be certain to make good his charge and pounce on him before he has gone many yards.

Wounded tigers, if they can get at the wound with their tongues, keep it clean by constantly licking it, for they know instinctively the danger from maggots and other impurities. If they cannot reach the wound with their tongues, they at once go to the nearest pool and roll and plaster the wound thickly over with a coating of mud, which they allow to dry on top of the wound—all animals do this to keep the flies from laying their eggs in the wound.

On being struck by a bullet, a tiger invariably answers to the pain thus caused by a roar, though he will also frequently roar when fired at though not hit, simply from fright and surprise, but if he bounds away silently, he is certainly missed clean.

Male tigers are easier to manage than females, and very rarely charge, even when wounded, being much more easy going and good tempered. Probably in 95 per cent. of mauling cases the aggressor has always been a female and not a male. It was a tigress that mauled me, and it was always a tigress in almost every other similar case that I know or heard of.

In my estimation there are about three adult female tigers to every adult male tiger, the reason probably being, for motives of jealousy, that a male tiger kills every male tiger he meets and has the strength to kill, provided it is not his own cub. Male cubs also are cast loose from their mothers much earlier than are the females. But probably the chief reason is that male tigers fight more among themselves, and so kill each other off over questions of love.

In cases of particularly bad temper in tigers, the cause is frequently due to pain caused by toothache when teeth have been broken in

gnawing a bone, or have decayed ; also in killing porcupines in mistake perhaps for a small pig. Tigers often get pierced by quills in the feet, neck and mouth, which, if they are unable to pull out, fester and cause them excruciating pain. I have seen a tiger's pads quite rotten from such a wound, while I have frequently found quills under the skin of the forearms and neck of a tiger.

With reference to the mythical old and solitary jackal which is supposed to accompany the person of a tiger to warn him of danger and call him to dinner, in my opinion this is all bunkam. Of course jackals are frequently found eating at the remains of an animal killed by a tiger, in the same manner that they would be found eating carrion anywhere else ; but this does not prove that a particular jack is in the personal service of the tiger as superstition tries to make out. The call of the solitary jack called by the natives *koela-baloo* or *warrada* may and is equally heard hundreds of miles from the haunts of tigers. They are toothless, old and mangy animals, very apt to go mad at any time, who for some reason have been outcasted by their companions and condemned to lead a solitary old age like many other species of wild animals—probably in the case of jackals because they are no longer of any use to the pack, or on account of their mange, which they perhaps know by instinct is contagious. Their voices now undergo a total change quite unlike their ordinary blood-curdling howls, being—like their call of fear—a sudden, hair-raising and prolonged unearthly yell, enough to fill any superstitious native with all kinds of weird ideas as to their ghostly qualities as special guardians of tigers, etc. At any rate, I should be very disturbed if I were bitten by one of these mangy brutes. I have come to the conclusion, that mange is one of the causes of madness among canine animals in the winter in India—the intense cold of Upper India causing them such intense suffering in their hairless condition that it affects their brain and so causes them to go mad. In Dehra Dun regularly every winter we have an epidemic of madness for which I am convinced this is the chief cause. For this reason, at least every mangy dog in the bazaars, and every mangy jack seen about, should at once be destroyed.

Legends and superstitions in regard to tigers are innumerable, for which I have not sufficient space to go into. It will be enough to

mention that so superstitious are the jungle people in regard to tigers, that they will rarely speak of them by name, deeming it as certain bad luck to do so, and consequently refer to him in an abstract manner, as the "big cat," "raja," "nai" (a dog), "jamadar," etc., etc., the idea apparently being that if they call him by his proper name he might overhear them using it and revenge on them the presumption.

In Hindustan proper, the native shikaris usually call the tiger the "sher," "bagh," "nahar" or "see"—"seni" being the feminine of the latter. In speaking of a panther, remember that natives more readily understand its name of "baghera," than other names for it.

In speaking of the length of tigers, I am afraid, in giving my honest opinion, I will rub up a number of people the wrong way. However, here goes:—Except a few freaks of nature, such as men nine feet in height, and as rare, I do not believe there are any tigers in India who, fairly measured, are more than eleven feet in length from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail between pegs and before the skin has been removed *from the body*. So, in my opinion, those who say they have shot tigers which, thus measured, exceeded eleven feet in length, are either drawing the long-bow or have shot one of these extraordinary "freaks of nature" to which I have referred.

When after tigers, never shoot at any other kind of game during the day, whether it be a bear, a panther or any other: many a good *bandobast* has been spoilt by thoughtless and selfish sportsmen being guilty of this.

The damage done by tigers is greatly exaggerated when this comes to be weighed against the good they do by keeping down other game, which would otherwise over-run and destroy the country. Tigers are often credited with a great deal more than they are really guilty of. A number of years ago a man-eating tiger suddenly appeared in the Chattisgarh District of the Central Provinces, and travellers along the road in a certain locality were snapped up with great frequency and regularity. Government offered a largely enhanced reward for its destruction, and relays of sportsmen tried after it in turn, but though they found the footmarks of the tiger and plenty of blood where the victims had been seized, none were

successful in obtaining even a glimpse of the tiger. At last one sportsman (not myself), who was smarter than the rest, noticed that on the scene of a fresh kill that had taken place almost under his nose, the footmarks of a human being which were considerably smaller than those which could have been made by the feet of the victim, who by his clothes appeared to be a wealthy man.

This set the sportsman thinking, and on making further enquiries, he learnt that all the former victims also had apparently been well-to-do men, but as they were all travellers of unknown residence, and always alone when attacked, no one could say what valuables they might or might not have had. The sportsman's theory now became more strong, namely, that there had been some foul play, and not due to a tiger at all; so the matter was placed in the hands of the police, with the result that a *jogi* who had lately taken up his residence on the road in this neighbourhood was arrested, and with him were found two stuffed tiger's pads and all the jewellery and cash which he had robbed from the men he had murdered under the name of a man-eating tiger. Thus the tiger was again unjustly accused. Native professional shikaris also are not above using the stuffed pads of tigers to aid them in the prosecution of their profession.

But I must really, in mercy to the reader, call a halt in this otherwise endless flow of "random notes".

Before closing I should mention, in reference to the numerous and various details of systems and methods of shooting described in this chapter, that if the routine of these details are not again specified in other chapters when the same methods are being employed, it must be taken for granted that they have been nevertheless carried out as a matter of routine, though the specific mention of a number of such details have been omitted in order not to confuse and disjoin the thread of the story.



## CHAPTER II.

GHOGRİ, CHINDWARA DISTRICT.

*24th March 1887.*

At the commencement of the year 1887, when in charge of the Chindwara Division, persistent complaints reached me of increasing depredations caused by a very old cattle-lifting tiger whom the natives of the locality positively assured me was known by them personally to have regularly visited the neighbourhood of their village Ghogri every hot season for no less than 40 years. Of this of course I was at first sceptical ; but when I finally killed this tiger and beheld his enormous proportions and other indications of advanced age, I fully believed their statement as to his age ; for he was, with perhaps only one exception, the largest tiger that I have ever seen killed.

The complaints, however, emanated only from cattle-grazers who had taken out licenses to graze their cattle in Government forests, who consequently were the chief sufferers from the proclivities of this old tiger ; otherwise owing to his well-known good temper and easy-going ways he was looked upon by the inhabitants with good-natured tolerance, and even with affection, for it was well known to all that he never did any human being any harm, and even boys were able to drive him off by stoning him when his attentions became too pressing in the direction of the cattle in their charge.

For a tiger to have reached this age safely, it followed that he was pretty well up to all the "ropes" in regard to the wiles of sportsmen—so much so in fact that these gentry had for years given up his quest in despair, for this cunning old gentleman had long since learnt to have nothing whatever to do with their treacherous hospitalities in the shape of tempting young buffs tied by the leg of a night to a stump, in lonely places in the jungles. His footmarks would show that he had frequently walked round and round such baits—but touch them? not he! We might well imagine such an old veteran chuckling to himself: "Na, na, me friend, there's no green in this child's eye, so you may take that lump of India-rubber to the Marines!"

His last escape was two years before from Mr. T., the former Deputy Commissioner of the District, who wounded him in the shoulder with a 10-bore *conical* bullet. But, strange to say, he recovered, and was in consequence looked upon by the natives with superstitious awe, and was considered invulnerable; with the result that now they were less ready than ever to help sportsmen in what they were convinced were futile endeavours.

Consequently sportsmen, both native and European, left him now in peace, with the result that he became so daring in his depredations among cattle that Government grazing revenues began to fall off in this neighbourhood, which to me, as the Forest Officer in charge of the forests, was a matter of official concern.

Finally, however, this tiger committed the heinous crime of killing a man!—some one who trespassed too far on his good nature, by blundering on to the top of him as he lay on the carcase of a bullock, and the tiger killed him in a panic.

This accident afforded the cattle-owners an excellent opportunity to agitate at Headquarters for special measures to be taken to destroy this tiger, for "had he not killed a man"—and the upshot was that the District Magistrate asked me particularly to go out to Goghri and try and kill the beast.

On arriving at the scene, I was concerned to find that a certain faction of Brahmans (priests) had taken it into their heads to deify this tiger, and I was concerned because I found that I would now have to work in the face of the almost fanatical opposition of the



followers of this faction—while, it must be remembered, that Brahmans have the greatest influence over the ignorant natives who look upon them as gods on earth, to be cursed by whom is a much dreaded calamity.

Fortunately, however, I found that there was also a rival faction in the locality, who were at bitter enmity with each other, which at once gave me my cue. An appeal to the rival faction for their prayers on the behalf of my endeavours, accompanied by a present of money, sweetmeats, ghee and cocoanuts, ostensibly to be offered as a sacrifice to the wood-gods of the neighbourhood, did the trick, and I soon had a strong party on my side.



I then sent my *salaams* to the opposing party with a message that we would deal with any one who would presume to interfere with us or our plans, and that in the event of even passive resistance, I would honour them with the pleasure of our presence for months to come, instead of days, until we succeeded in killing this tiger, to kill whom I had had the special instructions of the chief official authority of the District; and that in the meanwhile both I and my men would make it a special point of impressing this fact on certain parties.

This apparently settled the matter, for after this I observed no further indications.

As for the tiger. I of course knew it was of no use whatever to tie out any kind of kill, which would be more likely to make him suspicious, and perhaps leave the jungles altogether. So there was nothing for it but to try and work on his known proclivity for cattle-lifting. So for days I loafed about the most likely portions of the jungles in company with a herd of cattle, in the hopes that he might kill one of them as usual; while every evening I had the cattle always driven to a certain jungle pool, for such a practice when carried out regularly is a great and certain attraction to the feline of the neighbourhood, who in their night-wanderings, scent out what has occurred and guess instinctively that the cattle will probably come there to drink on the following evening also.

On the evening of the sixth day of these tactics, one of the men came running to say that he had taken the cattle as usual to the pool to drink, and as they were leaving it, the tiger rushed out and caught one of the cows that had lagged behind, and had carried it bodily off into the jungles.

This was good news, but it was too late to do anything then, for I am not a believer in sitting up at night when the matter is serious. But delay was risky, so I was obliged to place a number of pickets round this block of jungles in order to guard it against being disturbed by any of those who were anxious to frustrate our plans.

In the meanwhile I sent out to the surrounding villages for 100 men to be collected at my camp overnight, and having made all my arrangements, I retired to bed early.

Next morning I found the necessary number of men collected, and great enthusiasm prevailed, for in view of the various acts of sacrifice, etc., with which the jungle deities had been propitiated (at my expense), my men were fully confident now of success.

The whole of the country round about was very hilly, but where the kill had taken place was a level piece of country where the jungle was excessively dense and heavy, knowing which I had ordered a hundred men to be collected, for I did not consider I could work it with less.

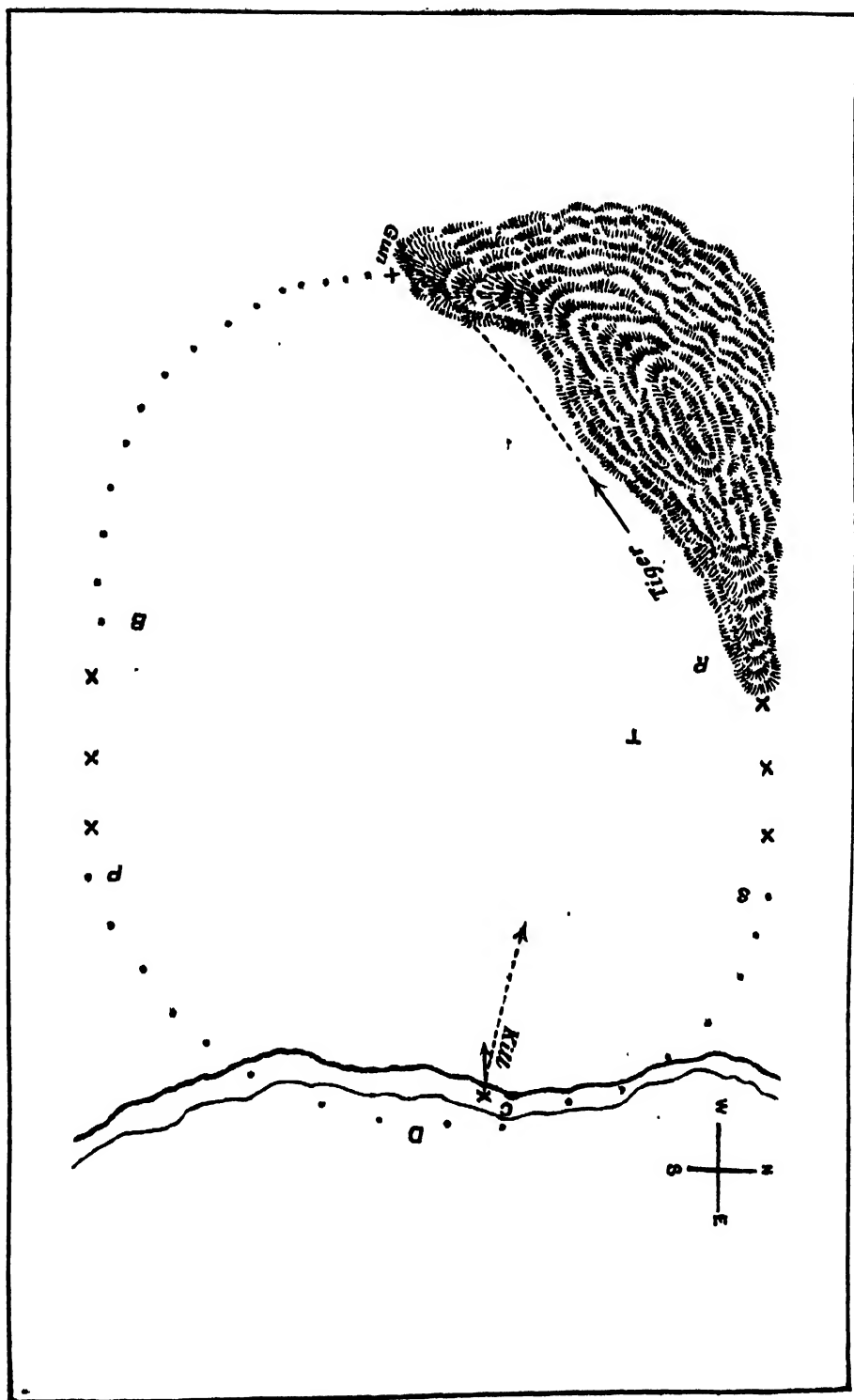
On arriving at the scene of the kill by the pool of water (C), I found that the tiger had taken the cow off towards the west, into a very dense bit of grass jungle, towards a low ridge of rising ground which lay about a mile away. Except for this little ridge, the piece of country around the scene of the kill was a dead level, and the dense grass jungles were excessively heavy in every direction ; so to all intents and purposes, it was a matter of indifference as to the direction in which the tiger should be driven, for water was not scarce. The only circumstance that somewhat restricted the movements of the tiger was that all the deciduous trees, except a certain few species, were now entirely bare of leaf.

Under these circumstances I at once directed my attention to the rising ground to the west, and made minute enquiries from local men whether or not there were any trees in leaf on the top of this ridge, for if there were I knew the tiger at this time of the year would for a certainty be under them.

However, I was positively assured that there was no such tree-shade whatever on the top of this ridge, which, on personal examination, I found to be correct. So in all probability the tiger would remain during the day in the shade afforded by the tall grass in the neighbourhood of his kill, though, it being yet early in the morning, he might be lying temporarily on the south-eastern slope of the ridge, so that it was necessary to enclose at least this portion of the ridge within the line of stops, though this would make the beat somewhat a long one.

However, I had an ample amount of men, so after doing some preliminary tracking along the surrounding pathways and nalla beds to see if there were any tracks which might show if the tiger by any chance had gone out of this bit of jungle, I selected a post for myself at the south-east termination of the ridge (at "Gun").

I then in person put up the stops along the crest of the ridge along the north, and having sent off one of my own men to put up the remainder or intermediate stops, and to line out his half of the beat, I returned, checking the stops I had already posted, and put up the right-wing stops in a similar way, and sent the remaining shikari to line out the remainder of the beaters and to bring up the beat in the proper direction, for both he and the local man with





him now knew exactly where I was posted, so that there could be no mistake as sometimes occurs when such arrangements are omitted.

In the meanwhile there had been plenty of indications that the tiger was within the circle of our beat, and, what was more, he was apparently on the move, so that perhaps we had been only just in time to tie him in, these indications being the numerous calls of wild animals, with whom this bit of jungle appeared to be particularly well stocked.

It is a curious fact, which I have frequently noticed, that wild animals appear soon to differentiate between a fat and lazy old cattle-lifting tiger that is comparatively harmless as far as they themselves are concerned, and a lithe and active game-killing tiger whose creeping presence in their neighbourhood they dread. A cattle-lifter they do not appear to mind one little bit, but seem rather to enjoy mobbing him in turn all over the jungles ; but when an active game-killer has been in a certain bit of jungle for two or three days, it will often be found that that jungle is as silent and deserted, as far as four-footed animals are concerned, as if a pack of jungle-dogs had been at work in it for a week.

In the present case I could follow the movements of the old tiger all over the area of the beat. While the men who had been watching this bit of jungle since the evening previous were also able to give me a detailed account of all his movements by the same means.

In about an hour's time the beat commenced, and the direction, from whence human sounds came, told me that the tiger had been well enclosed by the stops and beaters, so that, barring accidents, the old gentleman was now as good as dead.

To my left front, below the ridge about eight hundred yards away, on the top of a very tall and bare *sembal* tree (T) I could see a large male langoor monkey seize a branch with both hands as he peered down below him and shake it, apparently in a great rage as he uttered his hoarse coughing bark, which in sound resembles *cough ! cough ! cough-o-cough !* showing clearly that a feline was below him. After this the tiger apparently moved straight across the middle of the beat to the south ; but later on, again returned to the base of the ridge.

All was then quiet for some time, when suddenly a colony of rat-birds commenced mobbing something to my left on the hillside which I felt certain must be the tiger, whom I had no doubt the stops in that direction would soon turn in my direction.

All was silent again, and the beat continued to advance steadily, until they were at last within almost fifty yards of my position, but no tiger appeared.

I was considerably annoyed, for I was now certain that something had occurred on my left, and that one of the stops in that direction had deliberately let the tiger through.

I was on the point of proceeding to get down from my ladder in order to investigate the matter, when suddenly, on the hillside immediately in my rear, a couple of magpies who had hitherto been hopping about near me unconcernedly, suddenly commenced an ear-splitting chatter of alarm, which made me literally jump on my ladder as I sprang round, for I well knew what it meant, and there, on the hillside on the same level as myself, scarcely twenty feet off, was one of the largest male tigers that it has ever been my lot to see.

The suddenness of my action, and at such close quarters, apparently took the old gentleman by surprise and scared him so much that in his panic, instead of bolting, he crouched to the ground and put back his ears and lips with a snarl, gathering his feet under him with a kind of twitching motion in every muscle over his huge frame, evidently deeming it advisable under the circumstances of striking the first blow. He would undoubtedly have boned me out of my ladder, had I not anticipated his action by firing into him in the nick of time, firing both barrels at once, but not before he had already launched himself into the air in my direction. Owing to his having moved, my bullets, intended for his head, struck him further back between the shoulders. The next moment my ladder was struck violently to one side at the base, and the wounded tiger went hurling down the hillside and out of sight into the grass beyond.

Fortunately my ladder had been firmly tied at the top end, so that though the base end was sent flying to one side, I was yet able to cling to my perch, though the shock very nearly sent me flying also through the air.

The tiger had given a tremendous roar as he sprang in my direction, but after striking my ladder he never uttered a sound as he went on, so he had either received a death-blow or had been missed clean, though I could not conceive the possibility of the latter occurring at such a close range, for I had been perfectly cool throughout.

While I was debating the question, my orderly, whom I had placed in a tree some two hundred yards in my rear, called out gleefully that the tiger had fallen over stone dead in the open within forty yards of his tree, and that he could see him clearly as he spoke.

This was good news, so as soon as the beaters were up, I descended my battered ladder as best I could and hurried to the spot, and, sure enough, there was the old veteran whom the villagers assured me they had known for forty years lying quite dead, one of my bullets, as we found later, having shattered his heart.

As for the size of this tiger, the following measurements from my diary of that time will speak for themselves:—

1. Girth round the body—75".
2. Length from nose to root of tail—6' 11".
3. Length of tail—2' 10".
4. Total length (before skinning)—9' 9".
5. Height at shoulder—48".
6. Girth round the head—37".
7. Girth round the neck—36".
8. Girth of wrist—13½".
9. Girth of upper arm—26".
10. Girth of fore-arm—19½".

This is the largest tiger shot by me of which I have any written record, though perhaps in my younger and more careless days, when I failed to make any such records, I may have shot a few as large or even a bit, but not much, larger than this one.

The tiger shot by my son at Khara in the Saharanpur District in 1904 was 1½ inches longer in the body, and 2 inches longer in the tail; but if these measurements are compared with those given in the Khara chapter, it will be found that this Ghogri tiger is much the heavier all round—some 600 lbs. I calculated. I cannot account for the head of this tiger being apparently smaller than that of the Khara tiger; but such are the measurements in my diary. I am sorry I made no note of girth of his forefoot, which I



think would probably be something like 18 inches against 12 inches of the Khara tiger's foot.

I gave the men the wherewithal to make merry that night, and with which to feed and propitiate their jungle deities with thanksgivings to their hearts' content.

This tiger, I am convinced, would never have sprung at me in the manner he did, had he not been taken so utterly by surprise, and he did so simply in a panic, not having time in which to think of any other plan with which to ward off the blow which his instinct told him was coming.

On the *shoulder* of this tiger there was a mark of an old wound, and on skinning him we found, embedded in a kind of a sack in the under-portion of his *neck*, a 10-bore *conical* bullet, which had apparently been deflected by the *muscles only* of the shoulder in consequence of which it had merely run round on the outside, to the spot where we found it, instead of smashing through the muscles, shoulder-blade, and the vitals beyond, as it would have done had it been a spherical ball instead of a conical. So much for *conical* bullets! On enquiry, I learnt that this bullet had been fired at this tiger two years before by Mr. T., the late Deputy Commissioner of Chindwara.

This popular officer was the life of every community that had the good fortune of his company, and there are many good yarns told of him. On one occasion he received intimation that the Chief Commissioner on a certain date would visit and inspect his district, in consequence of which he was instructed to "have *everything* cleaned up and white-washed". These instructions were obeyed literally—very; but to start with: on the arrival of the Chief Commissioner at the railway station, Mr. T. worked manfully in personally conveying His Honour's personal effects to the carriage that was awaiting him, and just as the cavalcade was about to start, Mr. T. rushed in breathless haste in time to throw into the carriage as it was starting, what he affected to believe to be a part of His Honour's personal belongings—consisting of a dirty bundle of rags with a "lota" and rope attached, which he had snatched from a passing native—apologizing with a grave countenance, when reproved, for having made such a "mistake"! But this was not all: for as the

party drove from the station to Head-quarters, on all sides their astonished gaze met nothing but "white-wash"—all the trees, bushes and even stones that they passed were all "white-washed"—some ekkas drove ostentatiously by, and they, their ponies and even drivers were all beautifully "white-washed!" The orders had been obeyed! while at the jail, the cemetery and the lunatic asylum they were met with the word "Welcome!" inscribed in large letters over the gates.

### CHAPTER III.

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#### HOW I GOT MY FIRST TIGER—'CHERAPATLA').

In the year 1866, when I had only been a few weeks in the country, my Chief deputed me to report on certain matters in connection with a local dispute regarding some forests in the neighbourhood of a little jungle village called Cherapatla, in the Baitool District, regardless of the fact that I was totally ignorant of the language, the natives of the country, or the proper modes of camp life ; such was the way in which we worked in those by-gone days. I was therefore not sorry to find on my arrival at Cherapatla that the Commissioner, Sir M. L., and the Police Officer of the District, were also camped there, for I hoped I might pick up a few wrinkles from these older hands as to the proper way in which to set about in these wild lands.

A few days before my arrival here a large male tiger had killed the blacksmith of the village, so I found that the Police Officer was dutifully conducting a *bundobast*, by means of which it was hoped that the fell feline would be conducted before the " Lord o' The Land " to be shot. Being anxious to learn in everything, I accompanied them, but did not take my gun and watched the progress of the arrangements very carefully.

However, in spite of all each and every beat turned out blank ; and after several days of futile beating the chase was relinquished, and the Police Officer was sent on ahead with the camp to another part of the district ; while the " Lord o' The Land " honoured me with his company at breakfast and coached my young idea in regard to the *proper* way to shoot tigers successfully.

However, all I learnt was of a negative quality, for I learned several things that I ought *not* to do, and among them not to trust native shikaris with the work of putting out stops, but to do this important work myself.

The land being clear, I then set about seeing what I could do by my own little lone. But here again my simple trustful nature received another rude shock.

I sent out men to tie out buffs to provide free dinners for the lord of the forests, I mean the tiger of course, not the other lord who had gone. In due course one morning a grinning native turned up, and after cachinnating vigorously for some time, succeeded in making me understand that the tiger had killed one of my buffs. Good old tiger ; with the usual ardour of youth I counted him as good as dead, and pictured what his huge skin would look like pegged out on the ground.

I sent off my old one-eyed jamadar to collect coolies and started off in high spirits to inspect the kill. However on the way I was met by the gallant jamadar who had preceded me, and very pale and trembling he was. He had met the tiger in the nalla, he said, and only just saved his life by getting up a tree in the nick of time, as the tiger rushed at him ; at least this was what I gathered ; but these were all fairy tales, for there were no tiger's footmarks in the nalla, the truth being the man was afraid of going through these forests alone, and not unnaturally, for this tiger had killed a man only a few days before.

On reaching the kill, what was my disappointment but to see the dead buff still at his post, tied with—of all things—a *bambu rope*, which even an elephant would have failed to break. There being no drag, nor footmarks to go by, I had not the foggiest notion as to the direction in which the tiger had gone—whether north, south, east or west. So I was obliged to relinquish my intention of beating for the tiger that day ; and having had the remains of the dead buff removed I had another buff brought up, and this I tied myself with a rope that the tiger *could* break.

As I was pretty certain of getting another kill that night, I had men collected overnight ; and in the morning it was reported to me that the tiger had killed my buff, and having broken the rope, had dragged the remains away into the jungle. Everything being in readiness, we started off at once.

Having already been over the ground several times, I was well acquainted with it, so I made up my mind as to the direction in which the beat should proceed, even before I inspected the direction of the drag, which the shikari assured me was to the north of the river-bed. So halting the beaters in the jungles at a spot (b) about a

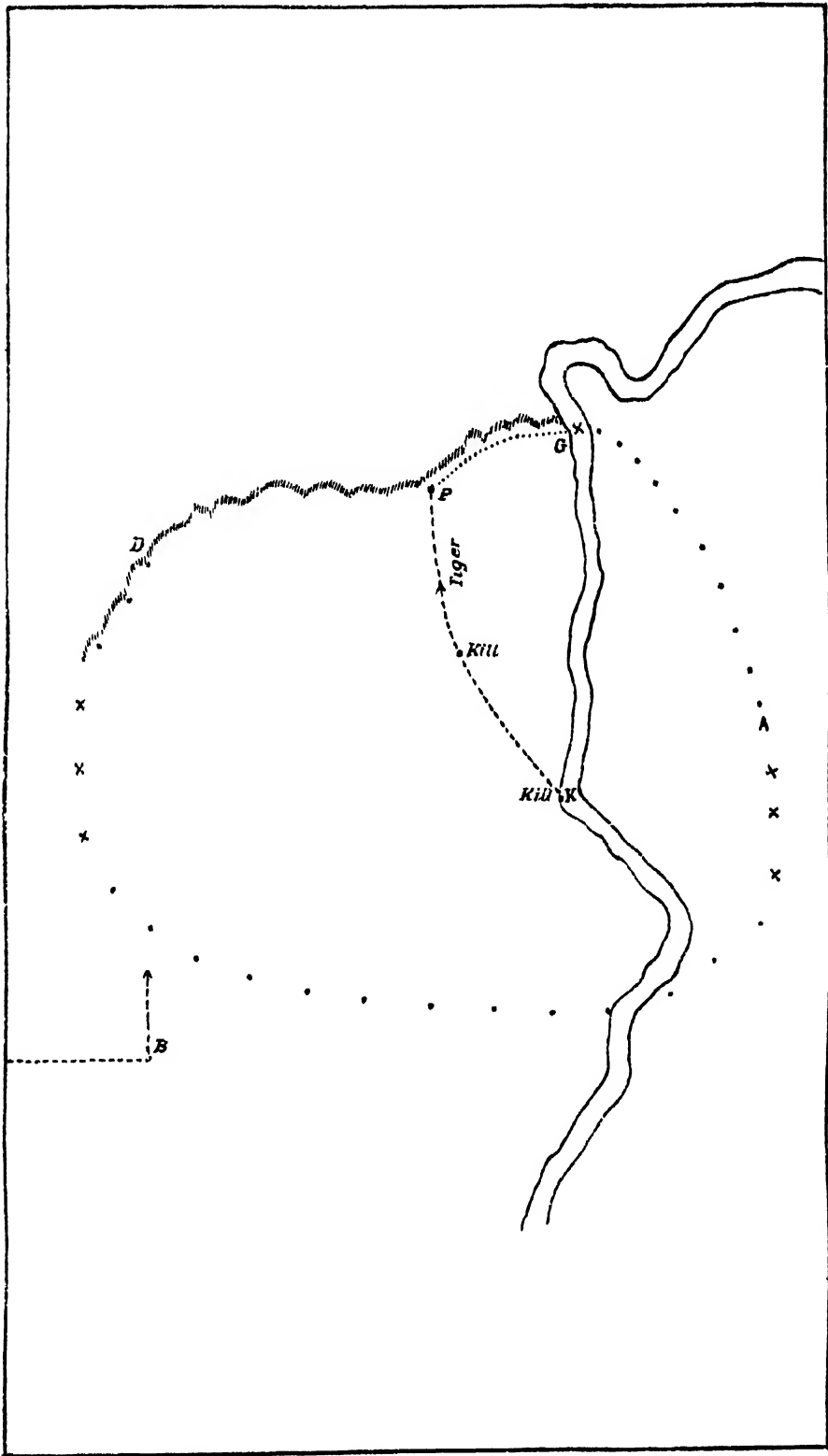
mile from the kill, I struck off at right angles to the left with my stops, heading for a small ridge (d), along which I then placed my right-wing stops as I went. Selecting a tree (g) for my shooting ladder below the ridge, where the latter intersected the river-bed, I proceeded to put out my left-wing stops, extending them to a point (a) about 700 yards higher up the river, and from thence I sent on my shikari to line out the beaters and bring up the beat, while I myself went to inspect the drag and to take up my position on my ladder.

My reason for hurrying on matters in this manner was that from my previous observations of the habits of this animal, I was convinced that this tiger was a very wary one, having been beaten several times, and in consequence was in the habit of deserting the neighbourhood of his kill fairly early in the day and thus avoiding the midday disturbance which his past experience told him would be surely followed on having partaken of the sportsman's hospitality. My idea was to ring him in before he made his customary escape to some more distant jungle ; and in this I succeeded.

Having sent off the shikari to perform his portion of the work, I quietly proceeded down the dry sandy bed of the river until I reached the spot (k) where I had tied out the buff on the evening previous. Here I found a pool of blood, the frayed end of the broken rope still attached to the stump, and a broad drag in the sand leading into the jungle towards the very centre of the beat ; so I was in luck's way.

The footmarks by the drag were those of an enormous old male tiger which I had no difficulty in recognizing, for there was only one such in these jungles.

Here my inexperience permitted me to commit the mistake of needlessly following up the drag. It was yet scarcely 8 o'clock, and the dense jungle was sodden with dew as I cautiously pushed forward along the track, peering carefully ahead expecting to see the tiger at any moment. I had proceeded about four hundred yards in this manner, when I noticed a number of vultures and crows seated on some trees ahead of me, and as I drew near, they flew down to the ground. Had I had more experience, the fact that they were not already down should have warned me that the tiger was *with* his kill, and the fact that they flew down on my approach showed that he had heard me and had only just moved off.

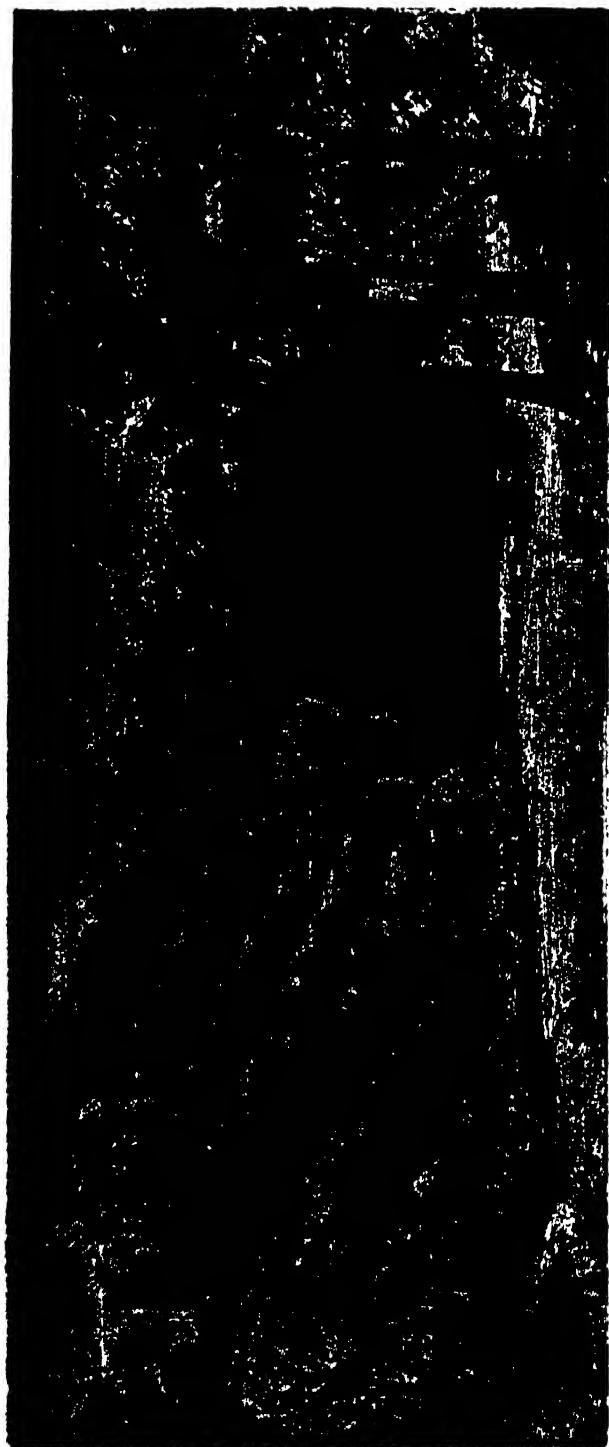


CHERAPATLA.









MY FIRST TIGER.





On the horns of the dead buff, which now came into sight, were a couple of mynas busily engaged in picking off the ticks in his ears, while the ugly bald-headed vultures were having a hasty scramble for a meal in his inside before I arrived to drive them off. I was still gazing at the handiwork of the monster when suddenly some of the right-wing stops along the crest (p) of the ridge began to tap their trees sharply, and I realized that I had disturbed the tiger who in consequence was trying to make his escape. So I legged it as fast as I could in the direction where my ladder had been placed, fearing I might be too late.

Nor were my fears groundless, for as I neared my post at a run down the sandy bed of the river, I suddenly spotted the tiger coming down the side of the hill at a fast crouching walk. He had not seen me, so I dropped to my knee—not daring to move further for fear the tiger would see me and sheer off.

Without hesitation he sprang into the bed of the river broad-side on to me, scarcely fifteen feet away. I immediately fired into the brown, and at the same time dashed into the cover on the river-bank, from whence I commenced to pump lead into the tiger who was rolling about in the bed of the river below me, kicking up a most appalling shindy, as he savagely broke his teeth on a large stone which he had taken between his paws in his rage. From first to last, this beast never saw me, which was lucky, for my first position when I fired was a completely exposed one. I soon silenced him, and there before me, lying stone dead, was my “first tiger,” a monster too, measuring nine feet eight inches.

I had lately bought, on behalf of Government, an elephant called Bag Bahadur, and as I had been given the use of this animal, I had him brought up to see how he would behave. I soon regretted it, for this was my own precious “first tiger,” on seeing which the elephant immediately rushed at it, first trying to impale it with his enormous tusks, and then getting it between his legs, dashed it backwards and forwards rapidly, and finally, giving it one tremendous kick with his hind leg, sent it flying up the river bank.

In the meanwhile I was doing a war dance round the elephant in my frantic endeavours to rescue the remains of my precious tiger. It was a lesson to me, not to in future set an elephant on to a dead

tiger if I wished to preserve the skin. However, we managed to get the enraged beast off in time to save the skin from much damage, though many of the bones of the tiger were smashed to a pulp.

I was a proud lad that evening as I wrote to my old father in England, telling him of the manner in which I got my "first tiger."



## CHAPTER IV.

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### '450 EXPRESS RIFLE'S EXPLOIT.

Forest Block No. 15 in the northern portion of the Jubbulpore District did not usually hold tigers, when, on the 8th of January 1894, while camped at Pipariâ, news was brought in to me that two tigers had taken up their quarters in it, for I had to inspect this block and had not anticipated any sport here.

I was pleased, because even in my own forests my opportunities for big-game sport was considerably circumscribed on account of the large number of shooting-passes that I had issued to other sportsmen in these forests—in consequence of which I was compelled to seek my own game more or less in the bye-ways and hedges, as it were—in places not already monopolized by pass-holders, and I had not anticipated a chance at a tiger until I came round to Block No. 13 at Umareea, which was then vacant.

Block No. 15 was not very promising, for it contained no regular supply of water, except a few and far between pools of catchment water in the otherwise dry water-courses resulting from the late winter showers of rain. That there might be such pools of water was merely a guess of mine at the time being, which subsequently proved correct.

This block was a dead-level throughout, except perhaps for a slight rise in the ground here and there, round which the dry water-courses wound their way, and being still early in the year, the cover was comparatively heavy. So I had practically no natural features of country to aid me in beating out these tigers.

I therefore ordered a full complement of one hundred men to be collected when I sent out my buffs to be tied out.

In the meanwhile I sent my camp on to Koonwan, so that I could work Jhiria, or No. 15 Block, on my way.

On the morning of the 10th of January a kill was duly reported, and my camp having already been sent on overnight to Koonwan, I and my men started to follow it *via* Jhiria.

We found that the kill had taken place at (a) the junction of two fire-lines, near a pool of water in an otherwise dry water-course; and the remains of the buff had been dragged towards the north.

On examining my large scale map, I found that a smaller water-course, about half a mile to the north ran parallel to the one near which the kill had taken place. So I at once circled round to the west and then northwards, and found that the tiger—for there was only one, instead of two tigers as reported—had apparently not gone out anywhere.

The northern water-course bent round a piece of slightly rising ground, so I at once took advantage of this natural configuration, slight as it was, and selected a post (x Gun) on its shoulder near a bend in the water-course, and here put up my ladder.

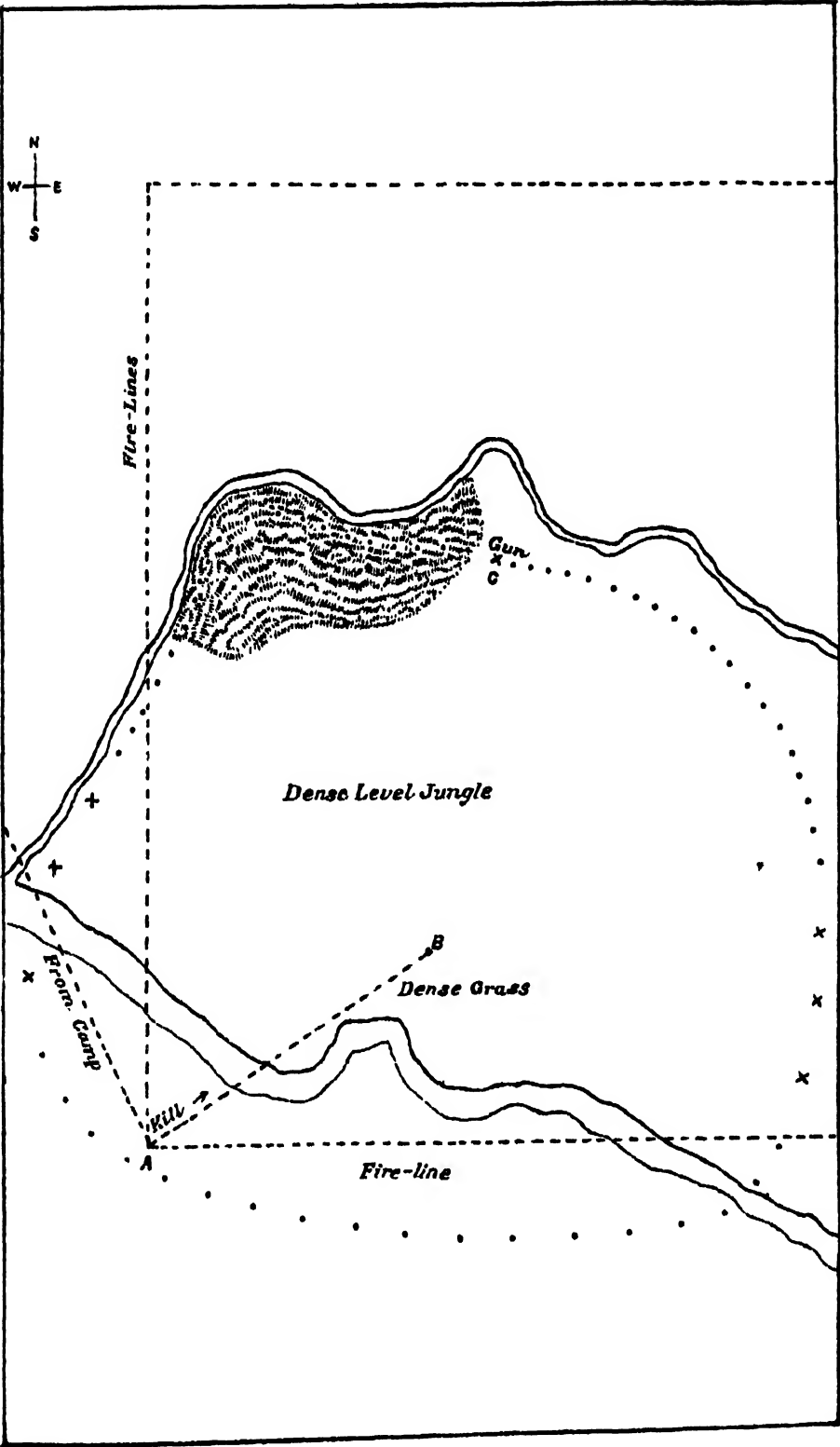
The cover was very heavy, so I used 60 of the hundred men as stops, leaving only 40 to act as beaters. But all my men were well trained, and all the arrangements went like clock-work, very rapidly and without any fuss or noise.

Having put up all stops, and sent off my men to bring up the beat, I climbed into my ladder and—the wind being favourable—lit my pipe while I waited events.

In due time the beat started, and in a very short time I saw a male tiger heading quietly straight towards me.

I had lately been doing some very accurate shooting with my little .450 Express rifle on black buck, so though I might easily have obtained a close shot at perhaps ten yards' distance, I was tempted to take a comparatively long shot at about seventy yards at the white chest of the tiger as he paused for a moment on a bank in front of me.

I believe I would have hit a sixpenny bit with that shot, for, whether a fluke or not, it caught him fairly in the centre of his



JMIRIA





throat, bringing him with a sobbing grunt on to his knees, from whence he never moved again.

The whole matter was over in a few minutes from the commencement of the beat, for the lady—the tigress—was not at home this time, perhaps fortunately for her.

When the beaters arrived, I got down from my tree and measured him as he lay—9 feet 4 inches—as noted in my diary.

I then sent the beast off to camp with a note of "all's well" to my wife, and proceeded well pleased with the world in general to investigate the contents of my tiffin-basket, and afterwards to inspect the forests.

Thinking I had done well enough for one day, I was not very keen about the tigress, so—somewhat to my shikari's disgust—I dismissed most of the beaters.

But such are the very occasions that fortune is most apt to thrust her favours on one, quite unsought.

The afternoon was well advanced, and just as we were thinking of relinquishing our inspections and wending our way camp-wards, a grain-carrier ran up in breathless haste to report that the tigress had just killed his bullock within about half a mile of the spot where we stood.

I had now only about twenty men left with me, and an old elephant that had been borrowed from the native zamindar of Umareea. However, the opportunity was too good to be lost, so away we started to see what we could do.

On arriving at the scene, we found that the bullock had been killed on a forest road, and the carcase dragged in to a comparatively isolated bit of cover, which under the circumstances was a great bit of luck.

Fearing the tigress might become aware of our presence and clear off, I took six men, and telling the remainder to give us a quarter of an hour's law and then to beat up in line towards the west, I hurried round to do the best we could.

Placing three men up trees at intervals of about a hundred yards apart as I proceeded, I selected a post for myself, and then lined out the remaining three men in a similar manner on the further side of me. This we did at a run.

I was on the point of reaching the tree into which I intended to climb myself, when suddenly a barking-deer gave an appalling yell almost into my ear as it seemed. Only those who have heard the call of a barking-deer at the distance of, say, ten feet, will understand me when I say that this sudden yell is even more startling than the roar of a tiger, so that I literally jumped back a pace. But the next moment it flashed across my mind that it was not I who had so alarmed the deer, but something else—something that I was hoping for and awaiting. So instead of climbing into my tree—to do which I now realised I was too late—I slipped quietly behind a bush, and waited.

Sure enough, as I had anticipated, there was my lady-stripes coming along at a crouching walk that was half a run, with ears laid back, a very evil-looking vixen indeed.

Her course would take her some thirty yards to my right, so I waited for her to come level with me. The Sal saplings here grew very thickly, making it very difficult to get a clear shot, and, to make matters worse, she suddenly began to canter.

How I wished I had not been such a fool as to give up my old smooth-bore for the '450 Express rifle which I now held in my hands, which—to make matters worse—was loaded in both barrels with explosive bullets, which I knew would explode in the air if they met with the smallest twig on the way.

However, in another moment she would be out of sight, so I was obliged to fire at her through the saplings, which were now flashing by her like the spokes of a wheel.

As was to be expected, my first bullet never reached her at all, having exploded on a twig, through which a solid spherical ball would have gone with ease into the tigress beyond. But my second bullet caught her fair and square on her shoulder, and knocked her over; but she regained her feet, and commenced to spin round and round roaring and biting at her shoulder, which I could see was broken and contained a huge external wound into which I could have got both my fists.

In the meanwhile I was making frantic haste to reload my empty rifle, but before I succeeded in doing so, the tigress gave a bound, and was out of sight, fortunately not having seen me, for I would have been at her mercy.

I then quickly called up the elephant, and having mounted it, quickly gave chase, forbidding any men to follow us on foot.

At first there were great quantities of blood, which appeared as if it had been poured out of a bucket; but after a time the blood-trail became less and less, until at last, in the failing light, we could no longer keep on the trail from on top of the elephant, and were finally obliged to give up the chase for that day, marking the place where the blood trail had crossed our road which led towards our camp.

On sending back for the men who were awaiting us, I learnt that a number of them had already preceded us to camp, on hearing which, the idea flashed across me of the possibility of some of these men having come across the wounded tigress as she crossed the road. But I dismissed the idea as being unlikely, and proceeded on our way towards camp.

On arrival at the village, what was my disgust but to find a pandemonium of wailing going on among the women, the meaning of which I at once guessed—what very bad luck.

As I expected, one of the wretches who had disobeyed my expressed orders, had met the wounded tigress as she crossed the road, and had been mauled by her in consequence. However, he was not so bad but that he was able to run all the way back to his home, having been bitten only through the arm, and with a few other minor scratches. I nevertheless treated him at once with carbolic, and insisted on him going to hospital. But though this man's wounds were comparatively slight, he nevertheless died a few days later, purely from shock. And I had the felicity of providing for his wife and family, owing to his own carelessness and disobedience of orders.

I again hunted for this tigress the whole of the next day, but I never saw nor heard of her again. I suppose she died somewhere, which I am afraid was very little consolation to me.

On the 20th January 1894 I met Mr. Scott, the Settlement Officer, and with him inspected the ryotwari village of Umarpani; but he unfortunately could not stay with me to take part in a beat which I had arranged on the following day in Block No. 13, for duty called him elsewhere.

Block No. 13 was a somewhat difficult bit of cover to work, so I ordered a hundred men to be collected overnight.

Next morning a kill was reported about three miles from camp. This beat was as carefully arranged, and was as successful as the first beat on the 10th. But I took good care to use my smooth-bore this time, and allowed the tiger to approach within 20 yards, where I dropped him on his knees with a neck shot in exactly the same manner as the other tiger. This tiger, a male, also measured exactly 9 feet 4 inches.

The accuracy of that little .450 Express rifle seemed to have a peculiar fascination over me, for in the diary of the same year, on the 30th December 1894, I see the entry : " had a *hank* (a beat) at Jhooli ; the tiger came out in the beat, 25 yards off, and the Express shell broke up on the shoulder but did not enter." So much for Express bullets !

In 1890 I was mauled with this weapon in my hands ; and with it in 1891 a tiger escaped with only a broken shoulder ; twice in 1894, as above, did the same thing happen ; and it happened again in December 1895. It was only after this fifth fiasco that I sold it to a friend who was very anxious to have it.

This is the worst part of possessing an accurate small-bore weapon, that one is so often very sorely tempted to use it against one's better judgment.



(1) *Cheetle.* | (2) *Buffalo.* | (3) *Bison.* | (4) *Samber*—43'.

## CHAPTER V.

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### MAN-EATING TIGRESS ON THE PRANHITA RIVER.

Of my diaries for the period during which I was in Chanda, namely, of the years 1869-70 and 1871, I can find only a few much tattered and insect-eaten pages of the year 1871, of the months of May and June only, though these also contain a note of the measurements of a bull bison shot by me in the month previous in April.

However, the few pages that remain, afford some of the details mentioned in this chapter, and also of the chapter given elsewhere under the title of "A Buffalo Hunt on the Pranhita River". Such as they are, I will give a few of the details from the above-mentioned pages of the diary :—

*Thursday, 4th May 1871.*—Camp Allapilli. Went after a buff, saw him twice but did not get a shot.

*5th May.*—The Patel of village Moongera came and said he saw 4 buffs and 3 bears on the way, drinking water near Moongera.

*7th May.*—Bunroo (my shikari) says he saw a tiger drinking at the little "jheera" on the other side of the village.

*8th May.*—Despatched my Report, which has been delayed because of the Sironcha accounts. Off to Moongera to-morrow.

*9th May.*—Camp Moongera. Found 5 buffs and about 8 bison had drunk at the Goodalmargu water.

*10th May* —(Diary eaten out by insects.)

*11th May.*—Wounded two bison, broke the shoulder of one and sent a bullet slap through the other.

*12th May.*—Shot a big bull buff. Fearfully hot.

*15th May.*—The Daroga came to see me and reports all well in his sub-division. Shikari came across one of my wounded bison, did not get him.

*16th May.*—Shot a bison.

*18th May.*—Marched to Allapilli. Starting off my carts for Chanda.

*20th May.*—Marched to Mahagaon. Daroga and carts remain at Ahiri.

*21st May.*—Marched to Bhorl. Found two tigers' prints on the road.

*22nd May.*—No kill. Gunga Singh arrived. I am not well, bad with dysentery. Marched to Macheeghatta.

*23rd May.*—Tied out buffs for the man-eating tigress. Heard from Herbert, my brother.

*Wednesday, 24th May.*—(My birthday). A kill. After a long hunt shot the tigress, which charged the elephant. Length 9 feet, a very fine one though old. For four years on my birthday, either on the 23rd or 24th I have killed a tiger. Heard of a man-killing buff here, his tracks are enormous, will try for him to-morrow.

*25th May.*—About 10 o'clock my shikari Bunroo came in and said that the buffalo had been seen about two miles down the river, so off we started in boats. Got him after a long and exciting chase, took twelve bullets to kill him (the remainder of this page also is destroyed).

I am very vexed that this diary is not complete, especially that of the 25th of May, for I remember I put down in detail all the

dimensions of this buff, which was an enormous beast. However, the account regarding the latter is given at length in the next chapter. In the present chapter I will deal with the case of the man-eating tigress.

There are hundreds—I might say thousands—of places among the many thousands of square miles of forests that cover large tracts of India, where quite unknown to the outside world the human inhabitants suffer terribly from the depredations of habitual man-killers of various kinds. In this category are sometimes wild boars, neilgai, bears, buffaloes, and, worst of all, man-killing panthers and tigers.

But so imbued are the benighted victims of these depredations, with fatalism, that they generally make no effort at all on their own initiative to rid themselves of these scourges. In fact they often go to the other extreme, and having invested the object of their dread with supernatural attributes, try to propitiate it with prayers and offerings, and in such cases generally do all they can to conceal the beast's existence from any sportsman that may happen at any time to come to the neighbourhood, thinking thereby to earn the gratitude of their pampered "demon." This is most of all true of the inhabitants that are of aboriginal origin, as they mostly are in jungle tracts.

Such was the case of a man-eating tigress that had become the scourge of the country at the time I am speaking of, along the Pranhita river between the small villages of Bhuri and Macheeghatta, not far from the junction of the four forest rivers, the Waingunga, the Wurdah, the Munna, and the Andheri, which go to make up the beautiful conflux known as the Pranhita.

With her head-quarters among the rocky *jamun*-covered islands of the Pranhita, the tigress levied a blood-thirsty toll on the unfortunate inhabitants of the country, as well as doing great damage among their cattle, frequently killing five and six animals at a time out of pure vindictiveness, with the result that she came to be looked upon by the simple jungle folk as an angry "demon" that needed propitiation.

In the year 1870 she killed an European Survey Officer, and as I was also stationed in the district at the time, the fact of the existence of this fiend came to my notice.



I repeatedly tried, without success, for this beast while on my various trips to the Ahiri Forests. I was now returning to Chanda for the last time, after a solid period of eight months' hardships in those primeval forests, which I had been deputed to select and demarcate. My orders were to report on the number, girth and species of every tree over a certain girth that were in the forests selected by me. This was terrible hard work, for it entailed the checking of millions of such trees by myself and my establishment. From sunrise to sundown, for weeks and months on end, we would be at it, beating backwards and forwards in a line consisting of about forty men, with myself, Rangers and Foresters at intervals along the line noting down the details called out by the men on either side of us, who tapped the trees with the backs of their axes calling out *bole* (solid) or *pokal* (hollow) as the case might be. That which caused us the greatest distress was the *kamach* or cow-itch which hung in great pods overhead and shook down its minute spines in showers on to us as we passed below, entering the pores of our skin and almost maddened us. There were of course no roads of any kind and we had simply to push our way through the tangled mass of *kamach* and spear-grass, etc., as best we could, and having thus selected and checked a suitable area, we had to cut a demarcation line round it in the form of a quadrangle, and then proceed over another area in a similar manner. Hornets' nests were another dread against which we had constantly to be on guard, big black brutes some four inches in length with a sting like a brad-awl, three of whom have been known to kill a man. They build a nest which looks like a large football about five feet in diameter, on the branch of a tree. Fortunately there were a great number of bears in this part of the country, so the large bees invariably had their combs very high up on the top of the tallest trees where there was little chance of their being disturbed by us, but not so in the case of the hornets. On one occasion we were obliged to set fire to the jungles in order to save our lives from the hornets. I give the above short sketch of some of the difficulties with which we had to contend, to show that a Forest Officer's life at times is not all skittles.

The neighbourhood of the little fishing village of Bhoiri was the head-quarters of both the man-killers, the tigress and the bull, though

I did not learn of even the existence of this bull till after I had killed the tigress.

I arrived at Bhoari on the 21st of May, but though there were two tigers there, the tigress that I was after in particular was not among them, being reported to be higher up the river, attending to the cattle belonging to a *tanda* of Brinjaras (or Banjaras) who were camped there at the time. So the next day I marched on to the next little village on the banks of the river named Macheeghatta. Here a deputation of Brinjara naicks or headmen awaited me. These Brinjaras are the sole carriers in these vast jungle tracts where there are no roads of any description, transporting such necessary commodities as grain, salt, etc., on pack bullocks, who are not led by the men but follow a trained leader wearing a bell. The Brinjaras rendered valuable service to the British armies during the Indian Mutiny, and earlier still during the Mahratta wars, being used of course by both sides, as in fact they were the only means of transport in some of these regions.

During their off-season in the rains, they congregate in favourite jungle resorts where good grazing may be had for their vast herds of cattle. Their women are extremely good-looking and are generally loaded with heavy ornaments of pure silver, while the men are equally well favoured, much taller and better built than the ordinary native; very quick tempered and vengeful, these jovial bearded ruffians delight in crime, but only where they can do so with impunity. After the rains they split up into family parties or *tandas* under a patriarchal form of self-government, and wander over the face of the earth—true Ishmaelites—their hand against every man and every man's hand against them.

These Brinjaras now form one of the recognized tribes of wandering Ishmaelites of India on whom the police have to keep a careful eye; but originally, after the Aryan invasion of India (for they are distinctly of Aryan origin, being generally fair with strong clear-cut features), they were probably the travelling merchant explorers, the prototypes on the land of the ancient Venetians and Carthaginians, though of an earlier date.

That they have survived so many centuries of strife and still maintain strongly their individuality as a distinct tribe, speaks for

their physical hardihood and determination of character. But the Brinjara as he has been, and is still now, though in a lesser degree, will soon be a thing of the past, for a network of railways is spreading over India in every direction and is fast usurping the only legitimate employment of the Brinjara, forcing him to resort more and more every day to the only other occupation he knows. Consequently these tribes will in time be a type—a memory only—of the past. But I am digressing from my story.

A number of Brinjara *tandas* had taken up their quarters in the neighbourhood of Macheeghatta preparatory to the setting in of the rains, and wherever there are large numbers of Brinjara cattle in jungle-tracts, there also are tigers, some of whom will follow a large herd, following along their trail at night, for hundreds of miles, often being led in this manner into comparatively open country ; it is thus the cattle-lifting tigers are found sometimes in such extraordinary places.

But it was not of the ordinary tigers that the naicks of the above-mentioned *tandas* had to complain, for these took only one bullock at a time, and that only occasionally ; but this tigress killed or maimed five or six at each onslaught, out of pure wantonness, and to make matters a thousand times worse, she had killed and eaten several of their herdsmen.

Being more enlightened than the less travelled inhabitants of the country, they had no scruples in seeking my aid to rid them of this scourge, for these men evidently were in a genuine terror of this man-eater.

The evening previous to my arrival they had placed an effigy of a man on a platform about eight feet from the ground, on the road leading to the *ghat* or watering-place, with the object of frightening this tigress away ; but in the morning they found that she had knocked the whole concern down and had torn the effigy to pieces. As the place was not far from my camp I went down to inspect it, and, true enough, there were the footmarks of the tigress, the remains of the tumbled down *machan*, and pieces of cloth scattered about.

Man-eating tigers are so often represented as being deformed in one foot that I hesitate to mention the fact that this one was afflicted in the same way, her left hind-foot being crooked and malformed. I

found afterwards that this foot had, at some bygone time, been smashed—probably by a bullet. More than this I found afterwards that her teeth were very decayed and broken, and I am convinced that she must have suffered greatly from toothache in consequence which would account for her particularly savage temper.

She had now, during the hot weather, taken up her quarters in and among the *jamun*-covered islands of the Pranhita.

She was also said to live apart from all other tigers (of whom there was said to be a party of five in the neighbourhood), probably because she was passed the age of coquetry, and as she was very regular in her haunts, coupled with the peculiarity of her footmark, it was not a difficult matter to locate her.

Having examined the locality well and found fresh footmarks, I selected a spot (k) on the lower bank, on the further side of the river, about a mile and a half from my camp, and here I tied out a young buffalo.

She had not been harried by any sportsman for a long time, and was not above killing a juicy young buff, so I was pretty certain I would obtain a kill that night; I therefore made my arrangements accordingly.

The water that surrounded these islands was very deep, too deep even in most parts for the poor old blind elephant I had with me this year to ford, so the use of boats and canoes, in order to transport the beaters, was indispensable; and as the villagers who owned them were loath to help, I made arrangements overnight to obtain a number of the *dheemer* class with their canoes and boats in the morning before they left their homes, both at Macheeghatta and Bhor.

This was done, and next morning I found about twenty-five canoes and a few large boats collected by the river bank, with their attendant *dheemers*, while a large number of Brinjara also turned up, some with old matchlock guns, to act as beaters.

The night had been a very sultry one, but a dip in the river greatly refreshed me, and as I was certain that there had been a kill, I did not wait for news to come in, but started off as soon as the men had collected, which was at about 7-30 A.M., quite early enough, for an earlier start might have resulted in the tigress being disturbed before she had time to shake down in her quarters for the day.

Long before reaching the spot where we had tied out the buff on the night previous, I knew that my hopes had been fulfilled, for high up in the sky were a number of black spots wheeling about, some of whom were shooting down one after another with half-closed wings and drooping legs in the direction of the goal for which we were making.

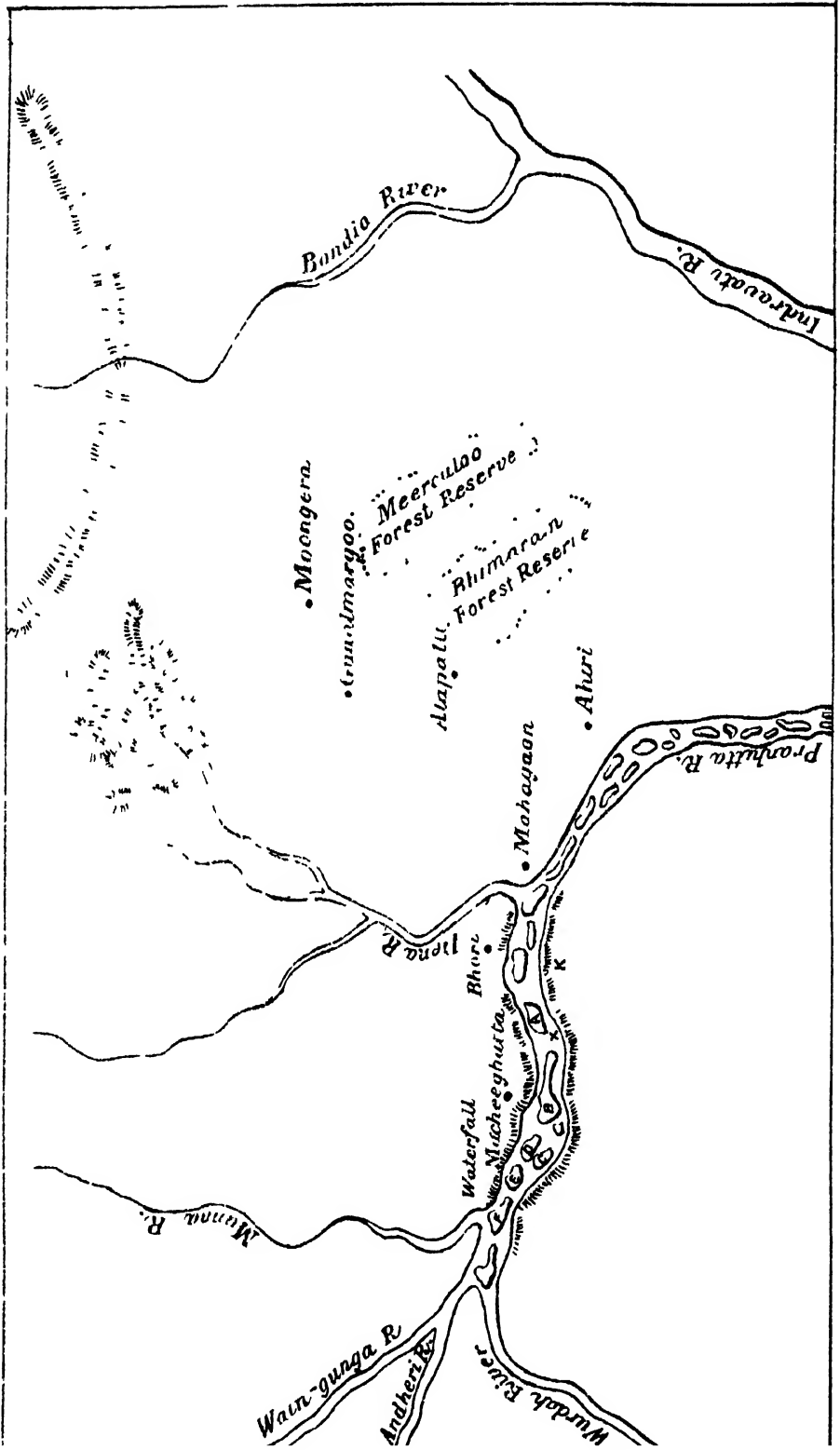
These vultures wheeling in the air, the dark evergreens and rocky banks and island, the tall dank grass and the soft yellow light of the rising sun which suffused the whole of this quiet solitude—all combined to make the aspect of these surroundings a very "tigerish" one.

On reaching the spot we found, as expected, that the buffalo had gone. It was the old lady herself too, for there was the deformed footmark, a pool of blood, and a broad trail of the "drag" in the sand leading up the river.

It was necessary now to track her in order to ascertain whether she was on the banks of the river, or on the islands. And it was as well we did so, for it proved she had gone much further than I had expected. We found the remains of the half-eaten buff within 200 yards, but from thence her footmarks wandered on, in and out of the grass patches that grew on the sands of the lower or "false" bank of the river, until it finally led down to the water's edge, from whence there was no return track. She had evidently swum across to one of the numerous islands, but whether she had not again swum across to either of the banks was a question that would be settled as the stops on either side were being put out, thus at the same time ringing her in effectually should she be on the islands, which I was almost certain she was. Whereas, if we went on poking about further without first ringing her in, she might become suspicious and make off, and a stern chase after an unwounded tiger is generally a hopeless one.

. So I quietly returned to the men, and having divided them into three batches, one batch to act as beaters and the other two as stops, I proceeded to give my instructions. The beaters consisting chiefly of Brinjaras armed with old matchlocks, etc., were to be landed on the islands in the larger boats, and as the tigress was a particularly savage beast, and was expected to fight, I permitted the full use of





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fire-arms and drums among the beaters. One lot of stops were to be conducted quietly by an orderly along the further bank of the river, to be posted by him at intervals in the trees on the higher bank, keeping a sharp lookout for any tracks in the sand which might show that the tigress had left the area that was being ringed in ; while I myself proceeded in a similar manner on the opposite bank until I finally took up a position about four hundred yards ahead of the spot where the tracks of the tigress led into the water.

On seeing these arrangements, the aborigines became quite converted, and were now eager to join in and help in every way they could, one old fellow with a matchlock volunteering to accompany me as a stop. The *dheemers*, too, in the canoes were as keen as the rest, and were invaluable later on as scouts, in marking and ringing in the tigress when she swam from one island to another.

Having posted all the stops, I proceeded in a boat to ascertain definitely on which island the tigress was, before taking up my position and giving the word for the beat to start. Examination on the further side of the first island (a) entered by her footmarks proved that she had left it and had swum across to the next one (b). As there were no signs of her having left this, I took up my position on the further side (at "g") and placed the old man with the matchlock on a rock which jutted out of the water to my left and told him to try and stop the tigress if she attempted to break away in that direction. Between his position and mine there was only a narrow but deep channel of water that divided this from the next island (c), so I knew the tigress would probably cross here rather than force her way to the mainland.

Everything being ready I signalled to the orderly, who had been watching my movements from the mainland, to return and bring up the beat. This he did, and the beat had been in progress for about quarter of an hour, with much beating of drums and firing of guns when, in spite of these precautions, there was a great roar and the old lady tried to break back through the beaters. But it ended in bluff only, for the Brinjaras stood firm, and the tigress was forced again to move on. She was evidently a very old "bird" and knew the dangers of being "driven".



One of the stops to my right was making too much noise, with the result that the tigress changed her course slightly to my left. Suddenly I saw the man I had placed on the rock throw away his gun and jump hastily into the river; at the same time I saw the tigress in the act of springing at him, so I fired quickly in order to save the man, and the consequence of my hasty aim, hit her too far back through her stomach. With a bound she cleared the narrow channel, and disappeared into the jungle, roaring loudly.

A number of canoes had crept past my position, and soon I heard the men calling out that she had left the third island (c) and had swum across to another (d) nearer the mainland; but here the *dheemers* intercepted her and prevented her from crossing over to the latter by shouting and beating their paddles on the water; they were behaving splendidly.

I followed as quickly as I could in a boat, and on the sands of the island where she landed I could distinctly see marks of her entrails having been trailed, so I knew exactly where she was hit and that she would still have lots of life in her, though she would eventually die of her wound. The brushwood was very dense, and as the water was more shallow here, I managed to get the old elephant across. Having mounted her on the front seat behind the *mahout* (elephant driver), with the latter's assistant, the "char-cutter," seated on her stern, we pushed forward through the brushwood, the poor old blind thing feeling her way painfully at each step. We had not gone far thus, when suddenly there was a roar and a rush, and the elephant immediately spun round, and presented her stern to the enraged tigress, who then sprang on to her hind quarters. Being blind, the elephant could not bolt, so stood where she was and shook herself frantically, roaring blue murder the while. At the same time the "char-cutter" from the back seat rushed over the elephant's back and threw his arms round my neck, calling on me to save him. I was struggling desperately to free myself from this embrace and at the same time keep my seat as the elephant frantically shook herself, for I was expecting the tigress to land at any moment on top of our heads, when the feline, evidently very sick from her wound, dropped off and retreated.

Having quietened the elephant, I heard the *dheemers* shouting that the tigress was swimming across to another island (e), from whence







MAN-EATER TOO EXPENSIVE



she went to another (f) near the mainland. It was now evident that she was trying to gain the heavy jungles that lay between the four rivers. My orderly spotted this, and on his own initiative, rushed his stops round on to the further side of the island, and with the help of the *dheemers* in the canoes, prevented her from crossing over to the mainland.

This last island was really a projection of land, over the neck of which the water poured in a perpendicular fall of about twenty feet. Below this fall was the only place where it was shallow enough for the elephant to ford, so crossing at this point, we were poking along under the bank of the island, which was on the same level as our heads, when I suddenly caught sight of the tigress flattened to the ground under a bush, only about ten feet off. I only just had time to fling up my gun and fire as she sprang at the *mahout*, luckily hitting her in the head. Her impetus nevertheless landed her on the elephant's head, which she scratched as she slid back dead into the water. Hearing and feeling the tigress, though she could not see it, the elephant backed quickly into the deep water behind, where the valiant "char-cutter," having armed himself with a spear, jobbed her with it in the leg in his terror, as he clung on, in fear of being either crushed or drowned. So the pandemonium that ensued, coupled with the roar of the falling waters, was something indescribable.

However, we at length again pacified the elephant, who was not much the worse for the encounter, except for a few scratches on her head and on her hind quarters, and a spear thrust, which might easily have been worse.

The tigress, having sunk in comparatively shallow water under the shelter of the bank, was soon brought up by the *dheemers*, though some of them suggested that she might still be alive! Securing her with ropes, we floated her down the river until we came opposite the site of my camp, when we landed and pulled her ashore.

She was a very old beast, her markings being more like that of an old male than a female, while her teeth were all broken and decayed. The *dheemers* were delighted, and it was during my siesta with my pipe in the shade, that they held a *panchayat* (council), at which they decided to seek my aid in ridding them of a solitary wild buffalo which had killed several of their men.

The Brinjaras were equally delighted, but somehow omitted to mention the existence of this buffalo to me ; they probably argued that he was only a hot weather bird, and they would soon be rid of him on the burst of the rains.

I was happy to have destroyed this terrible man-eater, but I was happier still with the prospect of sport that awaited me on the morrow.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### BUFFALO HUNT ON THE PRANHITA RIVER.

Here on the Pranhita—meandering with serpentine course between rocky and forest-clad banks, divided into stretches of deep dark pools by numerous islands covered densely with evergreen *jamun* bushes and trees—some of the prettiest river scenery of the world reveals itself to the eye of the explorer of these remote regions.

During the terrific heat of the months of April, May and June, when nearly all the deciduous trees of the forests above are bereft of their clothing ; when the pitiless rays of the fierce noon-day sun shine unchecked through their bare gaunt limbs, baking the ground once sheltered by their foliage, till the very atmosphere shimmers with the refraction ; it is then that the cool and dark shade of the evergreens on the banks of these rivers and islands becomes the common sanctuary of the denizens of the jungles.

The tiger is on the *jamun*-covered islands, either asleep or panting near a shallow pool shaded by over-hanging bushes ; the cheetle are dosing on the leafy river banks, while the jungle-fowl and peafowl lie panting on their sides under the dark shade of matted bushes, occasionally scratching the cool damp earth lazily over their bodies. All Nature seems asleep, and an oppressive silence reigns under the fiercely scorching glare that shimmers at noontide over the whole.

At intervals the regular and metallic *kook ! kook ! kook ! kook !* of the little green Coppersmith bird resounds monotonously across the silent valley, as he clings at the very end of an upright branch, bobbing and swaying his little scarlet head—first to the right and then to the left—at the end of each note.

But deserted as these valleys seem at such times, there is yet something in the atmosphere of their surroundings which impresses the hunter with their lurking possibilities.

It is here also, in the deep dark pools—with only the tip of his nose out of the water—that the solitary wild buffalo disports himself. Now sinking altogether out of sight for fully five minutes at a time ; then, as silently, coming to the surface again, followed immediately



by a loud snort, as he expels the vitiated air from his lungs, only to take another long breath, and again sink into the cool depths below. Thus the old bull passes the drowsy hours of the noonday sun, enjoying the undisturbed possession of any such haunt as he may appropriate, for not even a tiger will dare to provoke the rage of this fierce monster.

A buffalo of this description had taken up his quarters in and among the islands of the beautiful Pranhita river, between the small villages of Macheeghatta and Bhorī. He ravaged the fields of the villagers at night, and attacked the fishermen on the river by day, up-setting the canoes of the latter and killing them in the water ; he dug out of a shooting-pit two unfortunate native shikaris and gored them to death. He had been fired at time after time with no apparent result, and was therefore considered bullet-proof, so the *pagal shaitan* (mad demon) of Bhorī came to be looked upon as supernatural, to interfere with whom was only to court disaster. Thus this fierce brute became one of the accepted evils of the locality, and such was the superstitious dread that he inspired among the natives that his very existence was carefully concealed from sportsmen, for fear the latter might endanger their lives by insisting on employing them in carrying out measures which they argued must inevitably fail.

After an exciting chase, I had succeeded in killing the man-eating tigress, much to the delight of the villagers who had accompanied me, who, after abusing the dead tigress and her ancestors in the usual manner, smoked the tobacco which I had given them, while I myself lay under a *jamun* bush with my pipe, enjoying myself in a similar manner.

It was an intensely hot day, and I was on the point of dosing off into sleep, when through my half-closed eyelids I saw a movement on the part of the men, which at once raised my curiosity. The smaller groups had now amalgamated into one large one ; and the solemn nods and shakes showed that some weighty matter was being debated by these semi-naked jungle folk.

"You go Bhola—*jao, bhai, jao*" (go, brother, go), came the words when, apparently, a final decision had been arrived at. Thus exhorted, Bhola, their chosen spokesman, arose—*albeit*, somewhat unwillingly ; and, standing for a while on one leg as he meditatively

scratched it with the horny sole of the other, listening over his shoulder to their final words of encouragement and advice, he at last made up his mind and approached me.

"Ahem!"

"Who is it, and what do you want?"

"Mai hun, Mahraj." (It is I, my lord.)

The usual indefinite answer which most natives give to this question.

"Sahib," gasped the old fellow in an awe-struck voice, "Sahib, there is yet another *shaitan* in this locality, who lives in the form of an enormous *jungli-bhains* (wild buffalo)"; he was fast losing his courage as he glanced in vain over his shoulder for the support of his companions.

I was fully aware of their firm belief in demonology, and of the weird encounters with demons which some of the more imaginative members of their community allege to have experienced; so it was with a sceptical smile that I looked up and saw to my surprise that this was the same individual who had distinguished himself on that very day by throwing away his gun and diving into the river on the approach of the tigress, whom he had been instructed to "stop".

"Good, oh *Dil-bahadur* (brave heart), do thou then go and fetch him here for my inspection." This reference to his "caution" raised a laugh among his companions and put them into a good humour; but the implied doubt as to the truth of his statement piqued the worthy Bhola, and caused him to wax eloquent.

Turning round, he appealed, with a wave of his arm, to his companions, who now crowded round, grinning and nodding to support him. "Is it not true, what I say, brothers? Has not this *shaitan* ravaged our fields, attacked our cattle and killed our folk, fishermen and shikaris alike? Who now dares go into the jungles to collect fruit or honey, or to fish, as of yore, in the deep pools of the *naddi* (river)? How many of our people are there who have not fled the old village? Yes, our homes will become deserted ruins, for soon there will be none left to keep out the jungle. But the star of this Sahib is good, for has he not already rid us, without a single accident, of the cursed presence of the 'big cat'; so it may be, brothers, that he may also rid us of our second curse, the Pagal Shaitan of Bohri, if we do but tell him of it; and may the Bara Deo

(Great God) save me from the vengeance of this evil one, for I have spoken ! ”

I was much impressed with the earnestness of the old fellow's words accentuated as they were from time to time by a chorus of assents from his companions. So I no longer doubted that there was at least some truth in what they said.

On asking for proof, I was led by them to a spot half a mile further down the river, and there in the soft mud were the hoof-marks of what must have been a truly enormous buffalo, so large indeed that I could scarcely believe that they were those of a *bubalus* at all.

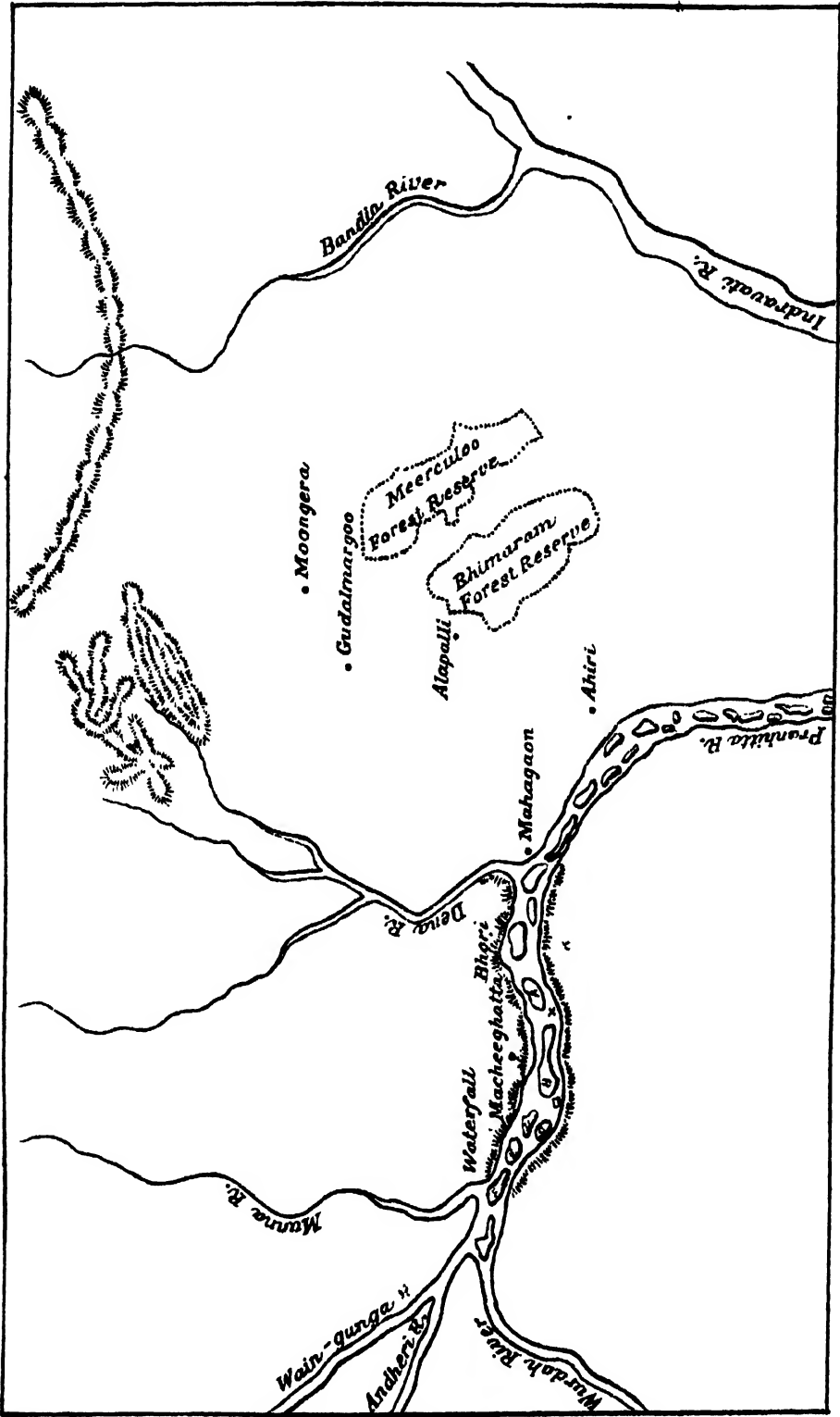
Here was indeed a prize worth more than any tiger living, and his habit of charging men at sight greatly increased my chance of bagging him; so I was hugely delighted with my prospects when we quietly withdrew to consult our plans.

Being again gathered in council by the side of the dead tigress, I turned to my aboriginal friends for their advice. Bhola again spoke up: “Khudawund” (favoured of Heaven), said he, “to-morrow at daybreak, two of our young men will proceed with the shikari to the river, and having located the evil one, two of them will keep a watch on his movements from trees, while the shikari will return to act as guide; the remainder we will leave entirely to your Honour, whom Heaven help, for this evil one is bullet-proof.”

This was all very well, but what was to be done then? Here was admittedly a very tough old monster, who was just as pugnacious in the water as he was out of it. He lived in, and among islands, which, though small, were densely covered with brushwood and grass, to follow him into which would be insane; while to shoot him as he swam in the deep water channels that surrounded these islands would be equally futile as far as the securing of the grand trophy, which he was said to carry, was concerned, for if killed in this manner he would immediately sink, perhaps in fifty feet of water, only to be carried away by the current and never seen again. I had now to put on my considering cap and consider the means at my disposal.

I had with me a number of fireworks, including rockets, and these would be invaluable in forcing him to show himself, should he at any time be disposed to sulk in the dense cover of the island. There





PRANHITA RIVER.

were also a number of light swift canoes belonging to the villagers, in which they could easily avoid the buffalo when in the water, so they would serve excellently for scouts to work in while keeping a watch on his movements, but they were too fragile for me to use one of them myself, for the firing of a heavy rifle, while in one of them, would mean the certainty of being capsized, when I would be at the mercy of the amphibious monster.

As I had to be the aggressive party and expected to be met with equal aggressiveness, I required something far heavier for myself and the men that accompanied me, something which he would be unable to overturn.

A log raft would be too cumbersome and difficult to propel with paddles, where the water was too deep to allow the use of poles. So what was I to do.

At last an idea struck me, which eventually proved to answer my purpose very well. The villagers had also some large "dongas," or "dug-out" boats, hollowed, each from the single trunk of a tree. It was in one of these boats that the unfortunate fishermen had been surprised, overturned and killed in the water by this very buffalo only a short while before ; so it would never do to employ them as they were.

My idea was to secure two of these long narrow boats, about five feet apart, by lashing two native cots across them, and then on the top of these again to build a stout platform of bamboos. As these boats stood fully eighteen inches above the water, the platform would be sufficiently clear of the surface not to impede the progress of the boats, but would at the same time render futile any attempt to capsize such a construction. In the accompanying illustration, the skeleton only is shown, in order to give the reader an idea as to how it was made.

Having decided on my plans for the morrow, we set off for camp with a light heart, taking with us in triumph the "big cat". At day-break next morning we were up, and within a couple of hours our novel raft was ready, and we had nothing to do but to await the return of Banroo, my shikari, who had gone to locate the position of the buff.

There apparently had been some difficulty, for it was not till 10 o'clock that Banroo turned up and reported that they had located

the buff, and that he had placed two men up trees to watch his movements while he returned to guide us to the scene. But as everything was in readiness, away we started as jolly as sand-boys, accompanied by quite a fleet of small canoes propelled by *dheemers* (fishermen) who sang of weird folk-lore as they went.

In this manner we proceeded for about a mile and a half, when our guide enjoined strict silence, for we were nearing our destination. Thus we crept forward cautiously till we picked up one of the two look-out men, who then reported that the bull had moved further down the river, and that his companion had followed him, while he remained to give us the information. I saw at once, from the remains of a small fire here, that the reason why the bull had been disturbed was because the men had been smoking.

Having shipped the man, we then resumed our silent journey down the river. At length we heard a low whistle, and saw the second watcher hastily scramble down from a tree; on reaching us he whispered that the 'evil one' had just entered the further of the two islands in front of us. He was still speaking, when I suddenly caught sight of the monster we were discussing, standing high and dry about 120 yards off; however, I did not care to risk a first shot at that distance, and in the meanwhile he disappeared into the grass behind him, apparently without having seen us.

The banks on either side of the river were of a considerable height from which a good view of the bed of the river could be obtained for a great distance, so unshipping some of the *dheemers* I told them to post themselves along the top of these banks and to signal from thence any change which the buffalo might make in his quarters.

I then sent a number of the canoes to creep round on to the further side, hugging the left bank of the river and keeping, as they did so, the nearer of the two islands between themselves and the one on which he was reported to be; the remaining canoes spread out where they were, so that he was now completely surrounded on all sides. I then pushed forward on my raft with two men, and the fun was about to commence.

In spite of the silence with which we proceeded, the cunning beast had evidently become aware of our presence, and was on the watch

for us, for the moment we rounded the shoulder of the first island, there was a furious bellow of rage from the second, followed by a huge splash, as the monster jumped bodily into the water, and commenced to swim towards us. Ah! my friend, no innocent fishermen now at your small mercy to upset and kill. It was comical to see the look of surprise in the old fellow's face, when he realized that our structure was far too strong and heavy for him to overturn. He then tried to rear himself on to the raft, but having no purchase in the water, it was an easy matter for us to fend him off with our bambus. I would have tried to maim him by breaking one of his limbs, but that I was afraid the bullet would be deflected by the water to a vital spot, and thus accidentally kill him, and be lost to me in the manner before described, so we contented ourselves by raining blows on his head with our sticks, and shouting with laughter as he snorted with impotent rage round and round our improvised stronghold.

Of course I could have brained him time after time, or even blinded him with shot in both eyes, but it would hardly be "sport".

At last he gave us up in disgust, and swam off in a sulk to the island again; but just as he was scrambling out, two twelve-bore bullets crashed, with a resounding *thud! thud!* through his ribs, but he only responded with a flourish of his heels as he dashed out of sight into the thick scrub.

A few seconds later, one of the look-out men on top of the cliff signalled that he had left the island and had swum to another lower down. On our approaching this, the performance was repeated. Again he charged and swam out to meet us; again two more twelve-bore bullets crashed through his ribs, as he dashed back to his refuge, only to swim from the further side to another island. I was a young hand in those days and had not yet fully learnt where best to place my shots under different circumstances.

After this he sulked and refused to show himself or move on, until we resorted to rockets, when he again swum off to another island, giving me two more long shots at him, as he did so. Here, however, no amount of fireworks or rockets had any effect.

Thinking he might perhaps be dead, I looked round for an opening from which to reconnoitre, and at last found just what I wanted, namely, a little creek, which appeared to run through the heart of the



island. The creek was scarcely thirty feet wide, which gave us a very narrow margin for safety as we pushed our raft quietly along it, peering cautiously in every direction as we went.

Dead did I say? Not much! but as lively as ever in fact—for suddenly there was a furious bellow of rage to our left, and a great black monster with head down and tail up, came tearing down on us through the jungle—a truly grand picture, of which we have tried to give the reader some idea in the accompanying illustration.

I dared not fire at his head for fear of the bullet glancing off, so I aimed lower and fired. The bullet struck him in the chest, but was deflected in some manner, and only succeeded in breaking his shoulder, but nevertheless it had the desired effect of preventing him from making good his charge, for he fell to the shot, and on recovering himself, limped painfully back to his retreat, followed by my second barrel as he did so.

After this third defeat, he did not face me again until the final scene, but did his best to escape, and to hide from his unrelenting pursuers. But of this he never got a chance; for the moment he left one island for another, he was followed by a swarm of light canoes, which surrounded and marked him down in his new retreat.

Thus the chase went on from island to island for about four hours, the *dheemers* mobbing and jeering him as he swam across the intervening stretches of water, avoiding easily all his endeavours in the deep water to wreak his vengeance on them. During the chase I frequently obtained long shots at him, but the beast seemed to bear truly a charmed life.

Failing in all his efforts to escape from us, he at last came to a standstill on one of the islands, and I could hear the poor beast groaning under some bushes, at the base of a rock which jutted out of the ground about fifty yards inland. The rock was about twelve feet high, but had a rough surface, which would afford sufficient hold to enable an active man, at a pinch, to rush up its face.

So I quietly landed, and as the bramble jungle was too dense behind the rock for me to hope to approach without discovery from that direction, I crept up as near as I dared on the open side, and then made a dash past the wounded buffalo, who was up immediately and after me, as lively as a kitten. However, I won by a "length,"









and just reached the top of the rock, as the buffalo, in spite of his broken shoulder, reared himself up against the face of the rock and glared fiercely up at me with savage grunts and snorts ; so close was he now that I could easily have touched him with my hand.

A valiant old rascal, he had made a brave struggle for his life, and now when finally brought to bay, he was still indomitable ; so it was with compunction that I placed the muzzle of my rifle to the centre of his forehead and sent a bullet through his brain, to which he sank in a heap. Aye ! a gallant old ruffian, indeed, who fell fighting to the last—a fitting end for the “ Pagal Shaitan ” of Bhori who had so long terrorized the country.

As mentioned in the last chapter, the portion of my diary which contained the measurements of this old monster was destroyed, but though I cannot now say what his other dimensions were, it has been firmly impressed on my memory that his height at the shoulder was 6 feet 6 inches ; he was the biggest buffalo I have ever shot, and the biggest I have ever seen, except the one of which an account is given elsewhere in this book, which was far larger than even this beast, and of course, like “ the ” fish, I did not get him.

Nevertheless, let the reader picture to himself a man 6 feet 6 inches in height standing by the side of an animal—an animal with short legs at that, whose shoulder reached to the top of that man’s head—and then perhaps he will realize a bit better the enormous bulk of the animal. His vitality had been wonderful, for no less than 12 of my bullets (hardened 12-bore bullets, with 6 drams of powder) had struck him, besides which we took out nearly a double handful of older bullets, slugs, bits of nails, etc., etc., which we found encased in various parts of his body, having been fired at him by natives.

I gave the horns and skull of this bull to Captain Doveton, who was then my chief, and were, I believe, presented by him to the Nagpur Museum, where they probably are still. If the head of this buff is still there the bullet hole through the centre of the forehead will serve to identify it.

I will not attempt to depict the joy of the villagers at the final downfall of the last of their dreaded enemies. With some difficulty we dragged him down to the river’s edge, and having firmly secured him with ropes, and buoyed up with two large dry logs, we floated

him off into the water. Many willing hands fastened themselves on to the ropes to help tow the fallen mighty ; while I myself lay back luxuriously on a soft bed of leaves and grass which had been spread for this purpose in the bottom of one of the larger *donga* boats, and was also towed.

Thus we proceeded up the river, first a group of canoes on the tow ropes, then the half submerged buffalo, then myself, while some few odd *dongas* brought up the rear. The men were all in the highest of spirits, and sang songs of victory as they paddled ahead with towing-ropes attached.

It was now about 4 P.M. and the sun's great heat had greatly relented, and I felt supremely happy as I lent back and smoked on my comfortable lounge while my boat floated with a gentle ripple over the surface of the placid waters.

Each spot that we passed, as we wended our way homeward, had its own particular interest as having been the scene of some particular phase of that day's sport. The fiery sun sank lower and lower as we slowly proceeded, until it became a large red disc in a brazen western sky, casting fantastic reflections of the bare gaunt trees across our silvery way, while on the whispering wind came Nature's sigh of relief, as her children awoke and sallied forth once more.

The pea-fowl and jungle-fowl now came pattering down to drink but halted among the bushes as we hove in sight, the first peering inquisitively with elongated necks and jerky heads, while the other, the perky little jungle-cock, with puffed-out breast, eyed us with feigned contempt, with his head on one side, but nevertheless with one foot raised, ready to lead the retreat at the first alarm.

A herd of cheetle go helter skelter up the bank with their sharp and shrill alarm calls of *kew ! kew ! kew ! kew !* resounding in every direction. *Pundoop !*—it is only that fool of a black and white king-fisher again, diving into the water for the hundredth time without ever catching anything. It is a wonder what that bird lives on, certainly not fish ; but he deserves better luck poor fellow, for though quarrelsome and noisy in his lazy way, he nevertheless works very hard all day long in his futile work of catching nothing.

In the gathering gloom of the twilight, a little dark object darts swiftly past us over the water—it is the blue king-fisher (the same

little chap as at Home), silently speeding his way to his retreat among the network of roots of some tree growing on the banks of the river—no fool this, for he rarely dives without coming up with a little bit of kicking silver in his mouth.

At last the twinkling lights of our camp fires come in sight, and then we haul the ponderous beast on shore. The jungle folk are going to have a rare feed off the enemy to-night, with a supplement of a certain stuff that is very dear to their hearts on such occasions.

Thus we will bid them good-bye—while I myself retired to sleep the sleep of the just that night—for had I not rid the countryside of two terrible man-killers.



## CHAPTER VII.

### BITER BIT.

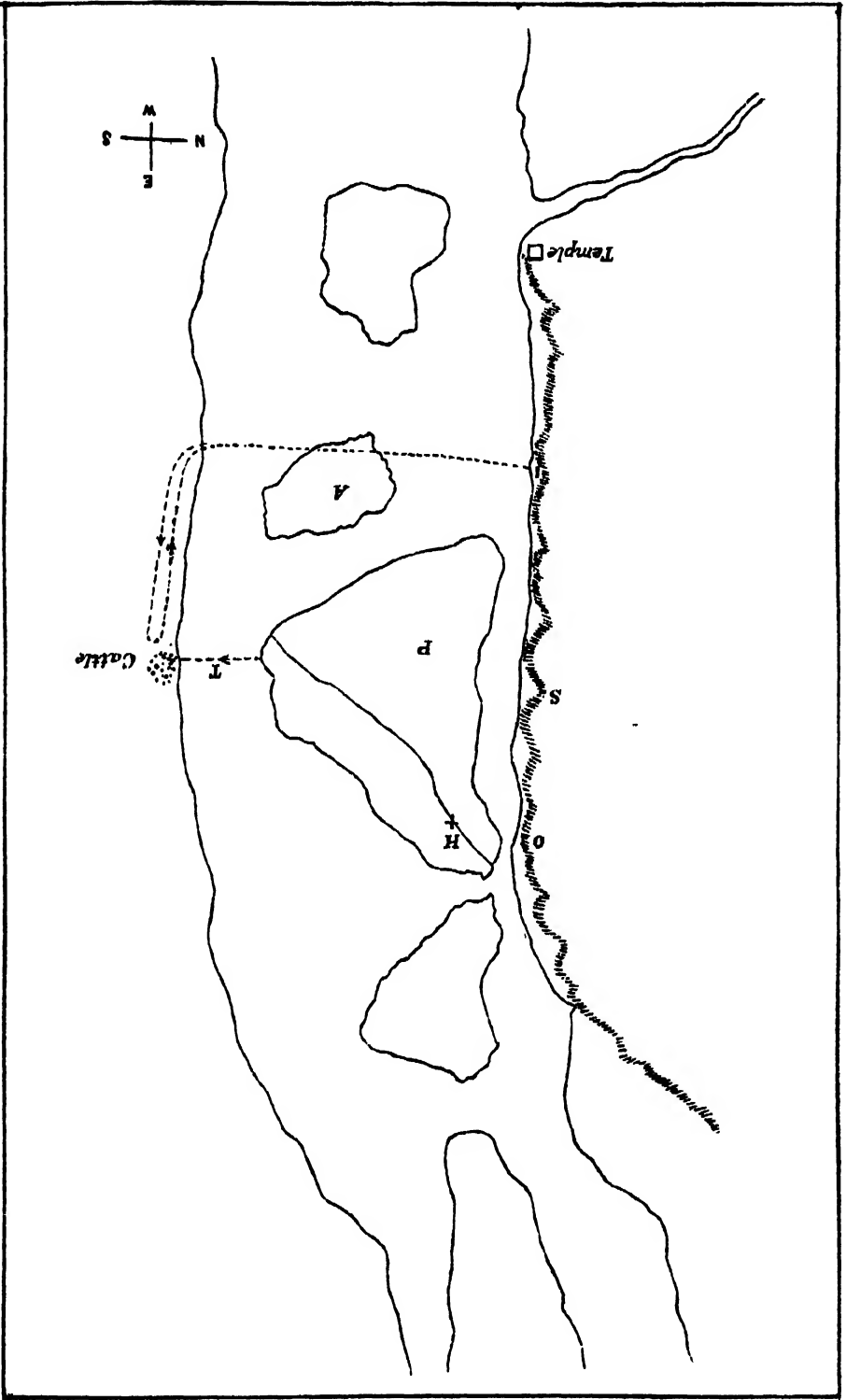
In the chapter on the Chaupna man-eaters in the Hoshungabad district, I mentioned that I was recalled by an urgent telegram to meet the Chief Engineer of the G. I. P. Railway. On that occasion no less than 52,000 sal sleepers were passed for the railway, for at that time I was in charge of sleeper-works on a very large scale in this district.

When this work in regard to the passing of the sleepers was completed, and I was again more or less my own master in regard to my movements within my district, an express runner reached me with a note from the Raja of a village called Bhadurgaon near the Moran river, begging me to come at once to his place and rid them of a family of tigers that had taken up their quarters near their village and were doing great damage to their cattle. On the heels of this letter appeared the Raja in person on his elephant, and said that on the evening previous one of the tigers had rushed at a fisherman as he was returning home by a footpath that ran along the banks of the river, and that the man only escaped by diving into the deep water alongside of him.

Hearing this I immediately started off on the elephant with the Raja, leaving my camp to follow, taking only my weapons and a tiffin-basket along with us, and proceeded to inspect the river and its islands, with a view to selecting the best places at which to tie out our kills.

I found the river about a hundred yards wide, consisting of long stretches of shallow water, with deeper pools here and there, with a series of islands, some of which were cultivated with tobacco plants and others overgrown with dense *jamun* bushes and grass.

The Raja told me that on account of the ravages of the tigers, the villagers had of late been obliged to keep their cattle entirely on the southern bank of the river where the country was quite open, but that even here the tigers had boldly swam across the river in broad daylight and had attacked the cattle on the further side.



MORAN RIVER.



On the northern side of the river the jungle was somewhat heavy and the bank on that side of the river was also much higher, so that it overlooked the river-bed and islands below it. So I chose the higher bank along which to proceed during this tour of inspection.

On the northern bank was also a picturesque Hindu temple at a point where a small natural stream of water ran into the river, which was said to come direct from the "Mahadeo Phar" on Dhoopgarh on the Pachmarie hills, so that it was considered sacred and, in consequence, was much visited by pilgrims from far and near, this stream of water being conducted into the river from this temple through a masonry figure of a tiger.

After examining this curiosity, the Raja and I proceeded on the elephant along the top of the miniature cliff. We had gone perhaps half a mile when, through a gap between the islands, we saw a long dark-coloured object swimming across the water to the further bank on which a herd of cattle were grazing in the open. It was some six hundred yards off, so at first we thought it must be a very large *mugger* (crocodile); but when we saw the creature haul itself out on to the bank (T) and then shake itself, we saw that it was a very large tiger, apparently in the act of stalking the cattle.

I immediately slid off the elephant and legged it across the river-bed, the water being shallow here, keeping a smaller and nearer island (A) between me and the position of the tiger. I was in hopes that I would arrive in time to find the tiger killing one of the cattle, but when I arrived on the spot, I found the herd wildly galloping about all over the place, but no tiger was to be seen. I learnt afterwards that the tiger had apparently caught sight of the elephant, for while I was crossing the river under the cover of the nearer island (A), he had suddenly jumped back into the river and had swum back into the larger island (P) from which he had apparently come.

Not finding the tiger as I had hoped, I turned my head and saw the Raja making frantic signals for me to return. So I recrossed the river as quickly as possible, and then learnt the tiger was in the second island. This island was in the shape of a pear with the broad end nearest to us; so I asked the Raja to take his elephant and beat backwards and forwards up the island towards the small end, where

I was going to post myself. I then ran along the top of the cliff, placing a man on the way (at S) to act as a stop until I reached the point (O) near the further end of the island. Here I slid down the cliff, but as the intervening channel of water at this point was deep, I had to swim it, though, had I gone a little further down, I would have found a shallow ford, from whence, as I afterwards discovered, there ran a footpath which passed almost through the centre of the island. However, I did not know this then, so placing my cartridges in my hat, and holding my gun well up over my head, I swam across to the island.

The cover here was very dense, so I was considerably concerned to find a place that would be sufficiently open for a shot. I was engaged thus in hunting about for a suitable place when to my delight I struck the footpath, which I knew at a glance would, under the circumstances, be the very road which the tiger would take.

However, I was afraid that the tiger might possibly branch off from it to the river bank before he had come so far, so I proceeded at a jog-trot along the footpath in order to take up a position on it further down. I was proceeding in this manner, when suddenly I saw the tiger coming straight along the path towards me. I at once went down on my knee and remained motionless, for I knew that a single bound to one side or the other into that dense cover would take him out of sight, when all my trouble would have been wasted. Fortunately he had not seen me, so came swinging along until he was within about thirty yards. Then for the first time he saw me, and drew back suddenly with a *woof*! Apparently he could not make out what sort of being I was, and it did not suit his dignity to run away from what might only be a small deer in his path. Thus he stood for a moment, a grand pose, with his head held high and one forearm still stretched forward before him.

My intention was to fire into his throat and then immediately throw myself into the grass on the side of the footpath. But just as I was pressing the trigger, the huge beast swerved as he threw himself round on to his haunches with the intention of bolting back. The result of this sudden movement on his part was that my bullet, which was meant for his throat, struck him on the point of his shoulder. I gave him the second barrel straight into his rear end as





he vaulted into the grass, and saw him give the spasmodic shake of his tail, which is always a sure sign of a death wound having been administered.

I then called up the elephant and mounted, but the beast on smelling the blood of the tiger absolutely refused to budge an inch. So I was obliged to dismount and go forward on foot, when, with a man now in front of him, the elephant had no objection to come along also, which was an advantage, for the driver from his higher perch would be able to keep some sort of look out ahead. But on reaching the spot where I had seen the tiger disappear, the elephant stopped again, and raising his trunk into the air gave the call of danger; it was rather an exciting and dangerous bit of work in such thick stuff, but our feelings were relieved a few moments later when the mahout called out that the tiger was lying dead at our feet, behind a bush, and sure enough there he was lying stone dead on his back.

This had been a great bit of accidental luck in picking up one of the tigers in this manner when merely looking over the ground. The biter was bit on this occasion with a vengeance.

I then had buffs tied out for the remaining tigers, and returned to camp with our slain, which was then skinned and the carcass deposited near the river; for which I was sorry latter on, for I was kept awake nearly all night by the wrangling of the *muggers* that fought over the carcass.

Next morning a kill was reported, and on inspecting the scene, we found the footmarks of two large tigresses and three large cubs, the size of panthers. The arrangements were then made in the usual way, and the beat started.

While the beat was in progress, I saw one of the stops calmly get down from his tree and seat himself on the ground. I could not call out to him for fear of spoiling the beat, so left him to take the possible consequences of his disobedience. A few minutes later there was a great roar, and I saw this man running for his life brandishing his axe, with the tigress in hot pursuit behind. The manner in which that man then flew up a tree would have given points to any monkey; but he was safely up out of reach by the time the tigress reached the tree. She made no attempt to pull him out



of the tree, merely looked up and roared at him, and then came quietly trotting along towards me.

About fifty yards in front of my position there was a hollow in the foreground, containing two or three clumps of bambus, and here the tigress disappeared from view.

I was expecting her to appear each moment, when suddenly there was an uproar among the bambus, which I then perceived contained a large bear. Here these two beasts kept up a wrangling argument over the right of way for about ten minutes; but the bear stood his ground, and I could see him making short rushes in the direction where the tigress was answering him with snarls. I would hardly have believed it possible, but that bear drove the tigress back in this manner yard by yard, until she at last turned round and bolted, breaking away through the line of stops. His honour now being satisfied, the bear quitted his stronghold and came past my position. I was strongly tempted to shoot him out of revenge for having spoilt my shot at the tigress, but as I knew there was another tigress in the beat, I refrained.

Shortly after this, a large tiger cub about the size of a panther came out by me, but I let him go for the time being, for I knew his mother—the beast that the villagers told me was in the habit of killing two or three bullocks at a time whenever she attacked their herd of cattle—would soon be putting in an appearance. Nor had I to wait long, for soon afterwards I saw the old lady coming along in company with one of her large cubs. But she also halted behind the bambus in front of me, so fearing some accident as before, I fired at her with a solid spherical bullet through the bambus, emptying my second barrel into the cub as it dashed by me, sending him over dead. In the meanwhile the tigress, who had been badly hit, recovered and made good her escape for the time being.

I then called up the elephant, and having mounted it, found the wounded tigress lying up within fifty yards. She immediately rushed out at us with a roar, and the wretched elephant at once swung round and bolted, with the tigress clawing at his hind legs behind.

To be on a run-away elephant in thick jungle is not pleasant to say the least of it. I was seated in front with my legs on either side of the driver's neck, and when the elephant bolted, I flung myself

backwards flat on to my back with my face to the skies, had a branch caught me under my chin as we rushed along now, it would have broken my neck. As it was a bambu caught me across my nose and smashed the bridge, the mark of which I bear to the present day; and most of my clothes from the upper part of my body were ripped clean off. I was a much battered and sorry spectacle when the mahaut finally stopped the run-away at the end of about half a mile.

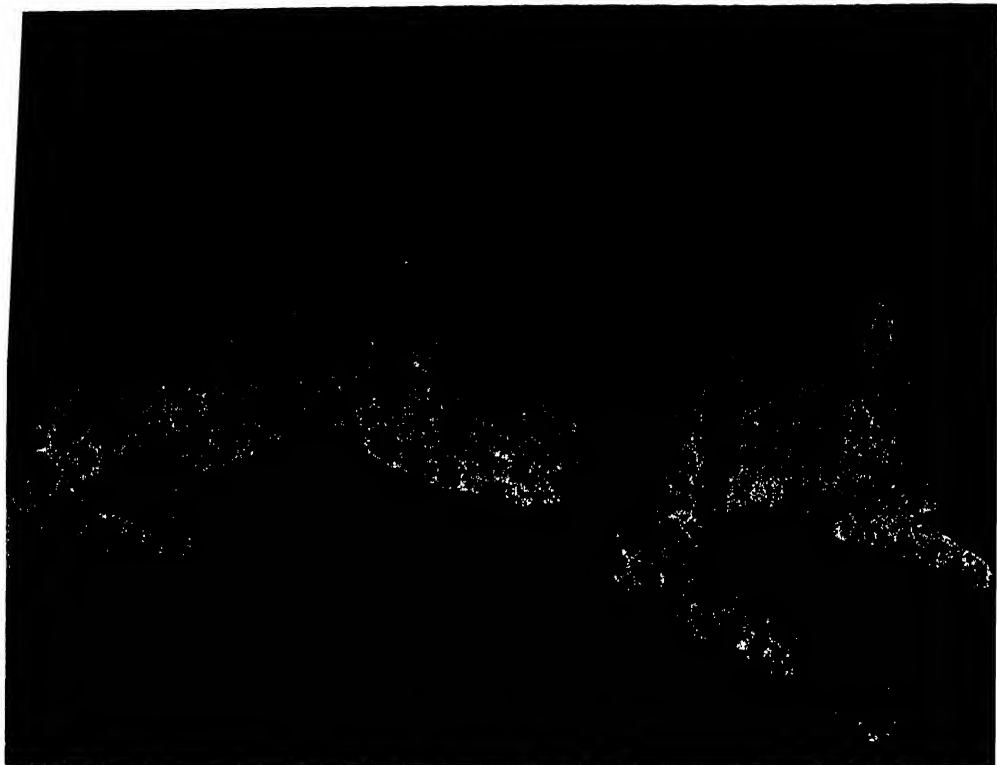
To get the elephant to face the tiger again after this was out of the question. But I was determined not to lose my tiger; so I immediately returned to the scene on foot, where I found her fortunately too sick to attempt much more of her acrobatic performances; so I was able to give her her quietus.

I then proceeded to hunt up her cubs, one of whom the men had marked into a portion of the river bank where a lot of débris had collected, which appeared to be a likely place for them to hide in. I was poking about peering into a tangled mass of roots of a tree that grew on the bank, when to my astonishment one of the little brutes suddenly charged out straight at me, and I was only just in time to stop him with a charge of slugs with which I had loaded my gun for the purpose, or I might have got more than I had bargained for from such a young animal, for they are not much larger than Newfoundland dogs.

Shortly after this, while walking over a mass of débris I felt something move under my feet, and at the same time there was a *waugh! waugh!* and another cub dashed out from under my feet, only to be rolled over in his turn with another charge of slugs.

Thus in two days I had bagged two full-grown tigers and three large cubs. I also got the third tigress, that escaped, shortly afterwards, as well as a panther. The latter I got one evening at dusk while returning to camp, in much the same manner in which I got another panther once in Mysore. I saw the beast flash across my path and take refuge in the roots of a tree on the banks of the river, apparently under the impression that he had not been seen.

On another occasion also, I got another male tiger in this neighbourhood when I had rather a ticklish business in recovering him, after he had got away wounded, but I am afraid the space at my command in this book is limited.



## CHAPTER VIII.

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### PANTHERS AND PANTHERETS.

I have pointed out elsewhere that the word "Leo-pard" can be reasonably applied only to *Felis Jubata*, commonly known to sportsmen as the Chita. To emphasize the absurdity of applying the word "Leo-pard" to *Felis Panthera*, I will reiterate here, what I have said on the subject in my chapter on Chitas.

The word "Leo-pard" means literally the "Lion-spotted" or the spotted-lion, and was applied by the ancients to one of the larger spotted felines with which they were acquainted. The only large spotted felines known to the ancients were *Felis Jubata* and *Felis Panthera*; so it must have been to one of those two that they applied

the name "Leo-pard," obviously because of some resemblance of one of them to the lion.

Now the lion is more dog-like, and differs in many ways from a panther, the latter being essentially a cat, in which it resembles the tiger.

A lion has a flatter skull, a very pronounced mane, and a slim tucked-up appearance about the loins ; all of which peculiarities are markedly possessed by *Felis Jubata*, who still further resembles a dog in its long thin dog-like forelegs, and in having its claws only semi-retractile and possessing a very high turn of speed. It is a long thin animal comparatively speaking, more like a greyhound in build ; while *Felis Panthera* in its prime is a heavy bulky animal in comparison, more like a well fed house-cat.

We have only to note the excessively attenuated forms invariably given in old representations of "Leo-pard" to know at once which animal it was the ancients wished to depict by that name, while in their writings they constantly refer to "the speed of the Leopard" using the phrase as a proverb for speed.

Against all this *Felis Panthera* has no excessive speed, being easily overtaken by a horse, no mane, a heavy bulky body, retractile claws and none of the dog-like qualities to resemble him to a lion. Moreover, the adjective "pardus" means "spotted" and not "rosetted"—*Felis Jubata* being the only animal of the two which is entirely spotted, while *Felis Panthera* is for the most part rosetted, not "pardus" or spotted.

I consider that the evidence proves overwhelmingly that the word "Leo-pard" was in the beginning and can be now only applied rightly to *Felis Jubata* ; and that any one calling himself a sportsman who, in the face of this evidence, speaks of *Felis Panthera* as "Leo-pards" should be dubbed as ignorant. I have always felt annoyed to hear so-called sportsmen talk about "Leo-pards" when in reality they meant "Panthers."

We now come to another point ; how many species (not varieties) of panthers are there ?

This is a question, like the perpetuation of the misnomer in the use of the word "Leo-pard," which has been quibbled over and left undecided too long. The following is my opinion and classification:—

I.—*Felis Panthera* (Panther)—in its prime.

- (a) Weighing about 150 lbs.
- (b) Body about 5 feet long, without tail.
- (c) Having 22 caudal vertebræ in its tail.
- (d) Having a longer and more pointed skull, with a strongly developed occipital ridge for the attachment of muscles.
- (e) Smooth shiny fulvous hair, with rosettes clearly well defined.

II.—*Felis Panthereta* (Pantheret)—in its prime.

- (a) Weighing about 50 lbs.
- (b) Body about 3 feet long, without tail.
- (c) Having 28 caudal vertebræ in its tail.
- (d) Having a shorter and less pointed skull, with no occipital ridge.
- (e) A dull coat and blurred rosettes.

These distinctions have been remarked on by a number of authorities such as Temminck, Jerdon, Blyth, Sterndale, Baker, Johnston, etc., the consensus of opinion being that these two species are quite distinct. I have personally seen in my time as forest officer perhaps over five hundred cubs of both species, but I have never yet seen a cub of one species among the litter of another ; they are an entirely separate species and do not breed together. There is as much difference between these two species of panthers as between a partridge and a quail, a flying-fox and a bat, or an English cart-horse and a Shetland-pony.

When a person kills a mouse he does not say he has killed a rat—at least he ought not to—nor does a sportsman who has shot a quail say he has shot a partridge : they distinguish between the two similar species as a matter of course ; then why should not sportsmen be equally veracious and particular in distinguishing between the two widely different species of panthers, to say nothing of the morality of adding greater vagueness as to the identity of the beast they have shot by calling it a “ leopard ” ! when they have shot an animal which, though full grown, is only a little bit bigger than an ordinary sized spaniel. Surely the morality of sportsmen is not such, that such a loop-hole for prevarication should be allowed to remain, simply for the want of a name.

As no one has yet supplied the deficiency, I have taken the bull by the horns and have coined a name for the lesser of the two species. To call it the "Lesser Panther" appeared to me to be too clumsy, and unlikely to be approved of or adopted universally. Sterndale suggested the name of "Pard" for the greater species of panther; but this word is ambiguous, for it means only "spotted" and therefore applies in a greater or lesser degree to either species, and more so to *Felis Jubata*, or to any other spotted animal. So I finally selected the word "Pantheret" as the most euphonic word which adequately expressed a diminutive species of panther. The suggestion of this name came to me from a most appropriate source, for it was made by my sister-in-law Mrs. Prendergast, who is the daughter of the great sportsman and writer, Colonel Pollock.

I have been closely associated with and have carefully studied the panthers of India for forty years, and I am satisfied that there are only these two distinct species of panthers, whom we will henceforth call Panthers and Pantherets.

Among pantherets I think there is only one variety, varying a little perhaps now and again in size and form according to their age; the greatest variations among them which I have noticed being frequently in the length of their tails, some being comparatively short and stumpy, while some have tails nearly four feet in length, thus enabling a not over-scrupulous sportsman, by adding the abnormal tail to a body only three feet long, to give out that he has shot a real panther instead of a little beast, the size of a dog. In appearance they are short squat animals, with round bullet heads, dull coats and blurred rosettes, which there is no mistaking.

Among the larger species (*i.e.*, panthers), however, the variations are so great that these have led to great controversies as to whether these varieties do or do not constitute distinct species.

In my opinion, however, there is no doubt whatever that the species is one and the same, for all of them at their prime come up to about the standard which I have laid down for "panthers," the variations in this species being due to locality, age, temperaments and freaks of nature.

The single species which I call "panthers", I divide into the following six varieties, in exactly the same manner that I do tigers :—

- (1) *Game-killer in his prime*.—Inhabiting densely shaded forests, whose coat is darker in shade, to match the shade thrown by tree forests ; well built but not gross, having to work for its food and, perhaps, not getting too much of it.
- (2) *Game-killer in his old age*.—As a general rule all feline get lighter in colour in their old age ; by this time they have attained to their largest growth in their frame ; but as their powers fail with age so also is their condition reduced by their physical inability to obtain the amount of food necessary to maintain them in good condition. Thus we sometimes find long, lanky, light-coloured panthers (or tigers), which though of the same species, yet appear now to be a different kind of animal.
- (3) *Cattle-lifter*.—Character in feline vary as much as it does in domestic dogs. Thus some game-killers, being shy by nature, will remain game-killers and resorters of only the densest forests in spite of their failing powers. But others who are of a less shy temperament will, when they find their powers failing them, resort to more open and level grounds, where they find food more easily procurable by taking toll of domestic cattle, goats, sheep, donkeys, ponies, etc. Thus we find the heavy sleek light-coloured cattle-lifters, both among panthers and tigers, their colour not only getting lighter with the advance in age, but also assimilating with the lighter character of their surroundings.
- (4) *Hill panthers (or tiger)*.—Typical of a Goorkha ; very compactly and muscularly built, with very little superfluous fat or flesh, yet often of exceptionally large size and weight ; their colour is generally darker to correspond with their darker and more rocky surroundings. One peculiarity which they have is that no matter what their size, their feet are very small and compact, especially in tigers, a ten-foot hill tiger leaving a footprint scarcely larger than that of a large panther down in the plains.
- (5) *Snow panther (or tiger)*.—Exactly the same species of animal, of the same size and weight, with the only

difference that its coat has assimilated by nature with its surroundings, as in the case of snow foxes, snow partridges, etc.

- (6) *Black panther (or white tiger)*.—Merely freaks of nature. A black panther cub has been known to be born in the same litter with ordinary cubs. They are freaks of nature in the same manner as white crows, albinos in human beings, etc. Black panthers are reputed to be more fierce in temper ; this may well be, in the same manner that dark people are more hot tempered than fair people who are notoriously more phlegmatic. As a matter of fact, it has been my experience that the darker the colour of the animal, both in tigers and panthers, the more fierce was their temper generally ; though this has generally been because they have been game-killers, who are naturally shy animals and are therefore more liable to become scared and therefore dangerous.

The above widely differing variations often mislead sportsmen into thinking that the animals belong to different species, whereas they all in reality belong to the same species, each variety when at its prime being about the same weight, size, form, and lighter colour in old age ; the variations being caused—(1) and (2) by age, (3) by temperament, (4) by locality, (5) by nature's mysterious power of assimilation, and (6) by nature's freaks.

The larger feline of British India, I divide thus into five distinct families :—

I.—*Felis Leo*—

(a) Weighing about 400 lbs.

(b) Body about 6 to 7 feet long, and tail 2 feet 10 inches

II.—*Felis Leo-pardus* (Jubata)—

(a) Weighing about 100 lbs.

(b) Body about 4 feet 6 inches, and tail  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

(c) Spotted (pardus), not rosetted like panthers.

III.—*Felis Tigris*—

Only *one* species, but of six varieties—exactly the same as described already regarding *Felis Panthera*.



(a) Weighing about 500 lbs.

(b) Body about 6 to 7 feet long, and tail about 2 feet 10 inches.

#### IV.—*Felis Panthera*—

Only one species, but of six varieties—as already described.

(a) Weighing about 150 lbs.

(b) Body about 5 feet long, and tail about 2 feet.

(c) Smooth shiny coat, with clearly defined rosettes.

#### V.—*Felis Panthereta*—

Only one species, but varying sometimes according to age, locality and pursuits. A squat bullet-headed animal.

(a) Weight about 50 lbs.

(b) Body 3 feet long, and tail  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet to 3 feet and more.

(c) Rough coat, with blurred rosettes.

Size and weights in felines vary very considerably in the same species, thus both lions and tigers have been known to exceed 600 lbs. in weight. In the same manner I have frequently known the lesser species of panthers, whom I call pantherets, to weigh close on to 100 lbs., thus rendering them liable to be confused with the larger and distinctly separate species, but for their other unmistakable distinctions.

Never having had any intention of writing a book, I unfortunately never took the trouble to record accurate measurements and weights of the lesser felines, only doing so in the case of exceptionally large tigers and sometimes of the larger species of panthers, ignoring the lesser little beast as hardly worth a shot and never going out of my way to shoot it.

However, though the weights and measurements which I have given are only approximate, I think they will be found near enough to warrant their classification and description as distinctly separate species, which should be named separately accordingly.

Except occasional, heavy, light-coloured, old, cattle-lifting panthers which are sometimes found resorting to the lighter covers on the fringes of the large forests, the panther proper—that is to say the larger species—are generally found in very heavy forests, where they often attain to a great size, sometimes to over eight feet in length, the size of a tigress.

There is a persistent idea among the natives all over India that the largest males of this species frequently mate with tigresses, who point as proof to the excessively prominent stripes with which some of these largest panthers are marked in the lower portions of the body about their stomach, calling them "doglas" or hybrids. But this I think is a mistake, for I once, and once only, had the fortune to shoot a true hybrid, between a panther and a tigress I think, which was a vastly different looking animal to that referred to by the natives as a "dogla". It happened shortly before I was mauled that I beat for what I thought was a tigress, the footmarks of the animal being like that of a female feline. During the beat the spotted head of a panther of extraordinary size pushed its way through the grass, followed by the unmistakable striped shoulders and body of a tiger, though looking a bit dirty as if it had been rolling in ashes. I succeeded in dropping this extraordinary creature dead with a shot in the neck, and, on examining it, I found it to be a very old male hybrid, with both its teeth and claws much worn and broken; its head and tail were purely that of a panther, but with a body, shoulders and neck-ruff unmistakably that of a tiger, the black stripes being broad and long though somewhat blurred and breaking off here and there into a few blurred rosettes, the stripes of the tiger being the most predominant on the body. One of the peculiarities of this creature which I particularly noticed was, that though it was male, it had the feet of a female and measured a little over 8 feet in length.

This unique trophy, I am sorry to say, disappeared during the general confusion that followed on my being mauled; it may have been sold off with others of my things while I lay unconscious or it may have been stolen; I never succeeded in tracing it again.

Having thus once seen a true hybrid, I am inclined to doubt whether there is really anything in the native idea of connecting some of the larger species of panthers, which they call "doglas", with tigers; on the other hand, it has yet to be proved whether such a hybrid as I shot is capable of breeding, or whether it is sterile. If they are capable of breeding again in their turn with other panthers, then there may be a great deal in this idea of the natives; in which case it may well be that it is originally owing to such crossings with tigers that we have the larger species of panthers in India.

However, we will reject conjectures, and recognize only the two distinct species which we find, sub-dividing them again only into varieties of the same species, whether the variety be due to age, temperament, locality or occasional inter breeding.

The larger species of panthers, being a large heavy animal, built more on the lines of a tiger, is not fond of climbing trees, though I have sometimes known them to put the remains of their kills, if not too heavy, up into a tree to be out of the reach of hyenas and jackals, but he does not climb trees habitually.

On the other hand, pantherets almost live in trees and often sleep up in them, and are frequently to be seen rushing up and down the trunks of trees for mere sport. in the same manner as a cat. I had an excellent opportunity of seeing a family of them at play on one occasion in the Chindwara district, when I was sitting up one evening for a tiger. The sun had not yet set, when a family of five pantherets, two old ones and three nearly full-grown cubs, came out into the open glade before me ; such romping took place, all five taking part, rolling each other over, scurrying round and round up trees and down trees. The rapidity with which they went up perpendicular tree trunks was astonishing, and an object lesson to me as to the ease with which a wounded pantheret could flash up and seize a man up in a tree if he wished to do so. Fortunately, however, the pantheret is not so fierce when wounded as the larger variety, doing its uttermost first to get away and hide and will only charge when hard pressed or when it fancies it has been detected in its hiding.

Pantherets prefer less heavy jungles than the larger species, being very plentiful on the fringes of large forests, and in rocky or hilly country, especially in isolated hills or *torias* of basalt rocks, where they live, and depredate the flocks of sheep and goats on the plains below.

Most sportsmen have probably noticed how very much more difficult it is to get a pantheret by sitting up in a tree over its kill than it is to get the larger species in the same manner. This is probably due to the fact that the pantheret more easily detects the watching sportsman, being more accustomed to climbing trees itself, in pursuit of monkeys, etc., whereas the larger species by habit confines its attention to what is on the ground.

I think the chance of shooting a pantheret is greater from a *patwa* (zereba) on the ground than from a tree.

Living as a rule in more open country, pantherets are more accustomed to the sight, smell and sound of human beings and domestic animals, and are hence much more daring and impudent ; think nothing of perambulating the streets of a village at night, or of entering cowsheds, verandahs and even the rooms of a house. They are for this reason more often trapped or shot.

At Korai in the Seoni district, our bungalow was surrounded by jungle ; one night I was awakened by a great shindy going on under my bed where I had a dog tied up. I sat up on the edge of the bed and kicked with my bare feet under the bed to try and discover what it was, and immediately felt something soft which first growled and then gave a bound into the centre of the room, where it stood and looked at me, and it was not until I shied my pillow at it that it went off. It was a bright moonlight night, but as I never dreamt that the animal would return, I did not think it worth while troubling to get out my gun. But I had scarcely laid down a few minutes when the dog again began to growl, and on looking up, lo and behold, there was a pantheret standing in the doorway looking in. I jumped up and went for it with my pillow and chased it into an empty bathroom at the end of the verandah ; had the window of the bathroom been shut, I might have shut it in, but as it was open, I was only in time to score one hit on its hinder parts, as it bounded out of the opening.

On another occasion at the same bungalow one night a hare dashed in through the open doorway of my room ; on looking up to see the reason for its alarm, I saw a pantheret standing at the doorway, looking eagerly in as if it wished to come after its escaped prey, which it had obviously been chasing. My servants wanted to kill the hare, but as the poor little thing had claimed the shelter of my hospitality, I let it go again, when the coast was clear.

At Naini Tal a few years ago a pantheret had the audacity to spring down in broad daylight from a higher bank at a passing dandy in which a lady was seated with a dog in her lap, whipping the dog off in its bound, and disappeared down the opposite *khud* before anyone scarcely knew what had occurred.

At Jubbulpore my Ranger, Gulam Nubbi, had a little pet monkey who used to be dressed up in weird clothes and a little cap, and made to dance for the edification of visitors. One night this absurd little object was being made to dance in the firelight in the centre of a circle of natives, when suddenly a pantheret jumped right into their midst and whipped off the monkey before anyone could raise a hand to save it.

It was in Jubbulpore also, that I had a second experience of kicking a pantheret under my bed with my bare feet. On this occasion I was sleeping outside, and had tied to the leg of my cot, for better protection, a kid, which was then the object of affection of my youngest child. A pantheret, however, elected to choose my bed as the best cover from whence it could stalk the kid, but though I kicked the pantheret with my bare feet, it persisted until it succeeded in breaking the cord with which the kid was tied and then bolted off with its prospective dinner in its mouth, but in doing so bounded right on top of the sleeping form of my syce, who, thinking his last hour had come, threw up his sheet in terror, which so scared the pantheret that it dropped the kid, which however was dead.

But I think the following account is the best illustration of the unreasoning impudence and daring of which this species is sometimes capable.

My son H., who had just come from England, had been with us in camp about a fortnight, when a pantheret killed one of our goats at night right in the middle of our camp, and had carried it off and put the remains up into a mango tree about 200 yards off. Personally, I had given up bothering after pantherets for many years; but my son of course was red-hot on having a try at this one. Near the mango tree was a *kallian*, or native threshing-floor, by which stood a field machan about six feet high, that is to say, a small native cot on the top of four six-foot poles with a semi-circular thatch over the cot about 18 inches high, which allowed a person to lie prone under it, but not to sit up. The pantheret was accustomed to this ready-made construction, while if H. sat up in the mango tree he would almost certainly be spotted. Personally, I would on no account have submitted to having to lie face downwards in this uncomfortable little kennel, but the keen youngster, I think, would have consented even

to hang head downwards for hours as long as he had a chance of a shot. There was only a new moon that night, so I put him in this place early in the evening.

A native *kallian* is a circular patch of ground, of a diameter of about 14 feet, which is cleared of weeds, beaten flat, and then washed over with wet cow-dung which gives it a clean, even, whitened surface, with a pole in the centre; the corn is then laid flat on this surface about a foot deep, and four oxen yoked side by side are secured by a rope to the centre pole and driven round and round it on top of the corn, which is threshed out in this manner. To this centre pole I now tied a live kid, and taking down the remains of the kill from the mango tree, dragged it so as to leave a scent-trail right up to H.'s machan. I then had these remains put into a basket and returned with it to camp.

Time then dragged on, and it was nearly dark, when H. commenced his fusillade, firing altogether seven shots within a space of five minutes, there being an answering roar from the pantheret, only at the last shot. What took place I will relate in the words of my son:—

“About an hour after you left me I saw a small black object crawling very slowly over the ground about a hundred yards away, going towards the mango tree, but as I expected it to come to me eventually, I did not fire. On reaching the mango tree I heard it scramble up the tree, followed by some sniffing and snorting, and after a little while saw the same black object crawling along the ground towards me, along the drag of its kill.

“On reaching within about 25 yards, however, it spotted the live kid below me, and immediately darted off to one side; crouched for a moment, and then in a flash was on to the kid, which gave a wild despairing shriek followed by a few groans, then a sickening wrenching and crushing of bones, accompanied by a kind of jerky grunting purr of the pantheret, which appeared to be lying on its back, kicking the kid up into the air with all four legs. I now tried to raise myself to permit my bringing the gun to my shoulder, but found the thatch was too low to allow this; moreover, I had drawn myself too far back, like a snail in its shell, when the pantheret first came into sight, for fear the beast might see me and clear off. Consequently, I had to fire with the barrel of my gun resting on the end of my

cot ; nor could I, under the darkness of my roof, see the gun at all. The result was that I made a clean miss ; but, strange to say, the pantheret lay perfectly still after the shot, so that for the moment I thought I had killed it, and was in the act of re-loading my empty barrel, when up jumped the pantheret and went off with a rapid crawling movement to my right front, where it halted about 30 yards off ; here I had another shot at it, but it only shifted its position a little bit to one side and again halted. I had just re-loaded, when it suddenly came bounding in again and began tugging at the body of the kill. I again fired, following it up with the second barrel as it went off ; this performance was repeated and I fired two more shots with no better results. I had fired all six shots in my cramped position with the barrel resting on the end of the cot, so that I could not judge its elevation, for I could not see it. I had now used up all my bullets, but in my other pocket had one buckshot, so I placed it in the gun. The fool of a pantheret was still crouching about 25 yards away, contemplating another Balaclava charge, so I let fly at it with the buckshot, and for the first time succeeded in hitting it, for it immediately roared and floundered about wildly for a few moments and then went off grunting. "

It is a great mistake to use any kind of rest for one's gun in night-shooting, and for pantherets at close quarters, buckshot is the best thing to use. On one occasion in Mysore I shot, with number four shot, five pantherets in one beat, while beating for jungle fowl.

In the present case, however, the tracks next morning showed us that the shot had only broken one of the forefeet, so we never recovered the beast.

All this had taken place within about 200 yards of our camp, so we all heard the shots, and the roar of the pantheret to only the seventh shot. The pantheret presumably, not seeing anyone, thought the flash and noise of the gun to be caused by thunder. At any rate it goes to show how ignorant and persistently daring they can sometimes be.

However, personally I do not think they are worth troubling about, except to be destroyed as vermin, for they are too insignificant as trophies and afford very little sport.

These little brutes do an enormous amount of damage to game, which they pounce upon from overhanging branches of trees. But for them we would have a great deal more game in the shape of deer, and even peafowl, pheasants, etc. The southern slopes of the Sewalik Hills are particularly overrun with these vermin ; only last year I saw the bed of a nalla in a gorge, called the Kabutra-wali-dang, for miles simply pox-marked with the footprints of pantherets, reminding one of the pattern on the inner side of a tent.

In its efforts to preserve game, it would be very much more to the point if Government were to take special steps to destroy this most destructive class of vermin.

The kills of pantherets can always be distinguished by the fact that they invariably commence their meal at the chest, while the larger species of panthers generally, but not always, eat their kills like tigers, that is to say, commencing from the hindquarters. Pantherets also make a very much worse job of the killing, especially if the prey is at all large or strong, mauling it considerably about the back of the neck, shoulders and flanks, with their claws, often also lacerating the nose of the animal a good deal. It is astonishing what heavy kills they will sometimes put up into an almost impossible position in a tree, fixing it there cleverly in the fork of a branch, the carcass being often far heavier than themselves.

It is this class of animal which does much the greater damage to domestic animals, on account of their greater daring in frequenting human habitations, especially to dogs.

I had a number of my dogs killed by them at different times, one of them being the mother of my pack of Harriers, the pair to Jack, whom I brought out from Australia. I have referred before to the want of instinct which these two imported dogs had in regard to feline, which in each case led to their being killed by feline, on whom they made unprovoked and deliberate attacks—Jack by a tiger, the account of which I have given elsewhere, and Fly by a pantheret. The latter occurred in the Bilaspur district in the year 1888. I was out one evening partridge shooting in some bushy and raviny country near camp, when I noticed the fresh footprints of a pantheret and was just about to withdraw on account of my dogs, when Fly suddenly started off on the scent of some animal and disappeared round the



bend of the nalla. I guessed at once what it was she was after, so I blundered along after her, but was too late, for I heard a yelp on ahead, and on coming up to the spot, found poor Fly lying dead in the bed of the nalla with a bite in the back of her head, which had killed her.

I immediately had the remainder of my dogs caught up and sent away to a distance with the men, while I myself withdrew behind a bush and waited.

They had scarcely been gone five minutes, when the ugly spotted little bullet head of a pantheret pushed its way through the bushes on the opposite bank, where of course I dropped it dead. Thus poor old Fly was swiftly revenged.

*A propos* of sitting up in the same tree in which a panther had placed a kill for safety, I will give a short account of the experience in this line of a sporting lady at Jubbulpore.

Having heard that a panther had put its kill up into a tree near camp, this lady elected to sit up for it in the same tree, in company with a Gond—the combined smell of the Gond and the sun-baked kill must have been choice.

However, the panther did not appear by daylight and the night was a pitch dark one. When it had become so dark that nothing whatever could be seen, the panther commenced *to climb* the tree. The situation was rather an awkward one on a pitch dark night; however, the lady rose to the occasion, and heroically removing the handkerchief which she had hitherto held to her nose, fired down into the darkness below her, blowing out, as was proved afterwards, both the panther's eyes. For the time being, however, the wretched beast made its escape, and it was not till three days later, that the villagers came in to say that the unfortunate animal, being driven by thirst, had scented out the water in the village well and had tumbled into it during the night and had been drowned.

One evening, in Mysore, I was returning to camp with my dogs, when I noticed, what at first sight appeared to be a monkey, spring into the roots of a tree in the bank which overhung my path at this point. However, I was not quite satisfied as to its identity, so I took my gun and loaded it with bullets and then peered into the roots of the tree, where at length I managed to make out, in spite of the failing light, the outlines of a pantheret crouching among the

roots, obviously waiting for me to pass, when it would have pounced down and whipped off one of my dogs ; but I cut short its amiable intentions and career with a bullet. Having spent forty years in the forests among pantherets, I could fill a book with the misdoings of this wretched little fiend ; but I am afraid of wearying my readers.

We will now pass on to the larger species, the panther proper. Being generally killers of larger game, this species do not often place their kills up trees, though they possess the instinct to do so, which I have on several occasions proved, once in the case of a man-eating panther, who had put the remains of a human body up into a tree. But these acts, I think, are only performed by those of the species who are of the lightest build, namely, by the females or by young males who have not reached the stage of life to which they all attain in time if they live long enough, when they are too heavy and gross or old to clamber about with safety among the branches of trees, for I have never known the largest ones to do it.

It is comparatively an easy matter to shoot one of these big brutes in the heavy jungles by sitting up in trees over kills, for their concern is only with what is on the ground and do not think to look up into the tree, unless great provocation is given them to do so.

A good illustration of this occurred lately in the experience of my two daughters while they were on a visit with my old friend, W. K. and his wife, in the district of Hoshungabad.

With them, however, was also another lady friend, who was very anxious to shoot a panther, and as everybody was very keen on seeing her perform, it was agreed that they should all sit up together on one machan—four ladies under the charge of W. K.—who was therefore supremely happy !

It was in the grand old Borhi forests that a typical “dogla” had killed a buffalo ; so on the banks of the river a large kind of crow’s nest was made, the kill lying in the bed of the river.

Here the valiant party installed themselves, at about 4 P.M., on a tree without a scrap of cover to screen them, bristling with guns. Imagine the situation, four excited ladies with their fingers on the triggers of four loaded and cocked guns pointed in every direction, the end of one of them perhaps tickling you behind the ear, or in one’s ribs. I think W. K. really deserved the V. C. To make matters worse

he made the ladies angry, for he had a cough and had brought out cough-lozenges, which of course he had put into the most crackley bit of paper he could lay hands on.

But, in spite of all this, that fool of a panther came out on the opposite bank, where it lay down and stretched about for half an hour within 25 yards of them, while the members of the crow's nest were nudging and swearing at the lady who was to shoot, but who could not see it, for she was probably looking for an animal the size of an elephant. Finally she heaved round, nearly upsetting the whole show, which was too much for the panther, who then made off, after having lain in full view within 25 yards for half an hour.

On the other hand, this unsuspectingness may have been a matter of individual temperament. In the Jubbulpore district a large panther killed a calf near our camp and carried it off into the heavy jungle for over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Having tracked it up and found it by means of crows, I placed a ladder against a tree and left my son to watch over it.

At 5 o'clock he heard the alarm calls of peafowls, cheetle, magpies, etc., in the distance, and in a short while, out walked a magnificent male panther into the glade in front of him and commenced to advance towards the kill quite unsuspectingly. H. waited without moving a muscle for him to come closer; but suddenly the panther swung round and bolted, apparently without any reason. H., however, took a snapshot at the vanishing streak, and either by luck or good shooting—he claims the latter, but I think the former—placed the bullet in the nape of the animal's neck, breaking the vertebra, killing it stone dead.

This panther was a heavy, light-coloured cattle-lifter, measuring 7 feet 5 inches shot near the village of Sanauli, district Jubbulpore, in the year 1896.

In the same year, in the Dhanwahi Range, I was making an evening march on one occasion. I was riding on my old white horse with an orderly in front showing me the way, when suddenly the man jumped on one side and shouted, "sher hai" (a tiger!).

To anticipate, I learnt later that my leader, who had preceded me, was held up at this spot by what appeared to be a tiger, who refused him the passage of the road for nearly half an hour. Now, the animal

in question was trying the same game with me ; the brute was evidently contemplating becoming a man-eater.

I at once jumped off my horse and loaded my rifle, and after some delay, during which my orderly was trying to point out the animal to me, I made out a couple of glowing eyes looking at me over the top of a fallen trunk of a tree ; so I took a careful aim between the two glowing orbs, aiming low, for they were scarcely 25 yards from me, and fired ; whereupon the eyes disappeared. On going up we found that the bullet had struck it fairly between the eyes, killing it dead. It was a large, but very thin and scraggy old male panther, with broken and decayed teeth. On skinning it we found its stomach quite empty ; in fact, it was starving ; so my supposition from its behaviour that it was contemplating the killing of a man was probably correct.

In the Lalitpur district my son H. was riding back alone to camp one moonlight night through dense jungle, having just raided, in his capacity of Police Officer, the resort of a certain gang of dacoits, when, while cantering along the jungle road, he saw a long, black object suddenly crouch flat on to the road about fifty yards in front of him. It was a panther, which apparently mistook the clatter of the horse's hoofs for that of a deer. H., however, drew his mauser pistol, and not stopping to think of the consequences, crouched low over the neck of his horse, who had not observed the danger ahead, and rode straight at it. The panther, however, apparently found out that there was something more than a deer bearing down on to it, for it suddenly bounded off the road with a grunt as the horse reached it, upon which of course the horse promptly stood up on his hind legs, in which position H. loosed off several shots with his revolver at the vanishing panther, and spent the next ten minutes in wondering when the time was coming for the apparently inevitable spill, as his horse bolted madly down the boulder-strewn hill.

A big panther also can go up the trunk of a tree pretty sprily when he chooses. On one occasion, in a tiger beat, just about the time that I was expecting the tiger to appear, a large male panther rushed like a cat up a tree in front of me, and when it got some fifteen feet up it, paused in a fork of the tree, looking anxiously downwards over its shoulder in a frightened manner, having evidently been badly scared

by the tiger. Its fright was comical to witness, and after clinging in this uncomfortable manner for a few moments, peering down first one side and then the other, it suddenly rushed down the trunk again and bolted wildly past my ladder, nearly knocking the latter over. Of course I did not fire, and was rewarded a moment later by boning a large tigress. This shows the respect that panthers have for a large tiger, who could of course crumple an ordinary panther up with one bite, as a cat would a rat.

I know of an authentic case of a wounded panther whipping up a tree and mauling a sportsman who had shot it. It happened to a friend of mine in the Central Provinces, Mr M., D.S., Police, the panther (or pantheret, I forget which) seized him up in the tree and mauled him badly about his legs before he succeeded in finally killing it.

In another chapter I have given an account where a panther sprang at and knocked me off my ladder.

On another occasion, in the Chanda district, I was returning to camp late one evening, when I saw a long, black object moving along the top of a bank about forty yards away, which at first sight I took to be a tiger. I was just in time to take a snapshot at it as it was disappearing from view, for he had apparently seen me and was making off. My shot, however, though I found afterwards did not hit it, so enraged the brute, that it immediately whipped round and came charging at me with grunting roars. I felt positive that my shot had missed it, so I considered its performance a bit of bluff, and stood my ground; indeed, I had no alternative, for it would have been fatal to try and escape. However, it showed no signs of stopping, so I gave it my remaining barrel at a distance of about ten yards, the brute rolling over in a heap at my feet, my bullet having gone straight down its throat. It proved to be a large female panther. Had she been with cubs, I could have understood her behaviour; but she had no signs of being with cubs, so her conduct was nothing but sheer nastiness of temper, for, except my last shot, there was not a scratch on her.

This shows how fierce and unreliable panthers are. They are never to be trusted. A tiger may be reared and kept as a pet even when it is full grown, but a panther, never. . . They make very pretty

and entertaining little pets for a few months when they are very young, but after that they invariably turn out treacherous and have to be got rid of or destroyed.

A wounded panther, I think, is even more dangerous than a wounded tiger ; for a panther can hide in less cover, while the panther's claws are hollow in the inside curve, in which there is always a quantity of putrid poison, whereas the tiger has very little, if any, such opening in its claws. So the chances are that though the claws of a tiger generally have a certain amount of poison on them from their sheaths, the claws of a panther would probably leave a greater quantity of virulent poison, in the person of the object mauled, than a tiger.

The chances, therefore, of blood-poisoning from a panther mauling is greater than from that of a tiger. Though, in my opinion, the blood-poisoning in either case is certain, unless the wounds are drastically treated with permanganate of potash within at least twenty minutes of their being caused, each and every scratch being opened up and treated, no matter how slight, even to the size of a pin-prick.

Now a few words regarding beating for panthers and I have done, for I have given a number of other experiences with panthers elsewhere.

Never beat for pantherets ; it is useless, for they will never come out, except perhaps in an accidental beat, invariably hiding either up in a tree or under rocks and bushes, until the beaters pass by.

Beating for the larger species is scarcely any better, for they too either hide, or break forcibly through the stops or beaters. Almost invariably something of the kind happens, so that in time I gave up, almost entirely, trying to beat for panthers, as not worth the trouble.

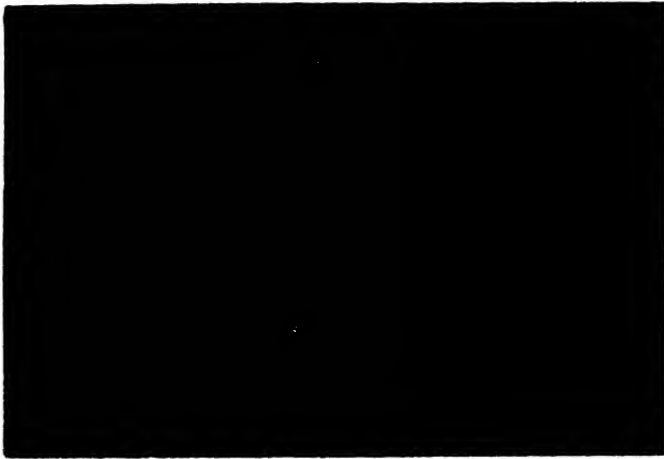
Only occasionally a heavy old cattle-lifter, with more of the characteristics of a tiger, can be successfully beaten out and shot, depending entirely on the nature of the country.

On no account ever try and beat out any kind of panther in rocky country, for they are certain to hide.

Except when they lose their tempers, panthers appear to have a painfully exaggerated consciousness of their physical weakness, and knowing that every living being is their enemy, they appear to live in the constant dread of the physical superiority of some and of the

mental superiority of others, and consequently live and behave like sneaks, except, as I have already mentioned, some of the largest panthers, who, having become confident in their powers, live and behave like a tiger, who is a gentleman in comparison.

*A propos* of the suspicion of panthers, it is a tip worth trying sometimes in dealing with an exceptionally suspicious panther who refuses to come early, or perhaps not come at all, to its kill ; find out its usual early morning runs, and go there with a live goat at about 4 o'clock in the morning. The theory is that the panther has passed over this spot during the night and saw nothing there, and having roamed about all night unsuccessfully, is returning in the



PANTHER CUBS

morning still hungry, when he finds a goat on the spot where there had been nothing before, so naturally concludes that it is one that has strayed there accidentally during the interval, and therefore attacks it without hesitation. This tip is worth trying by those who are sufficiently energetic ; but in going to the spot, do everything very quietly, and do not allow your men to make a noise when they are going away, as when they leave you sitting up of an evening. The goat being thus left alone in the jungle at early morning makes a great deal of noise, which is sure to attract the panther if it passes anywhere in its neighbourhood, whereas we all know how the little beasts will curl up and remain perfectly quiet at nightfall.

All night shooting from a *patwa* on the ground is not worth the candle, for the sportsman is bound to come to grief in the end ; he may kill fifty panthers in this way, and be killed, or mauled himself, by the fifty-first.

In my chapter, entitled " A Night Watch for Bison, " I described one of a number of my own experiences in *patwa* shooting, and in that I had a narrow escape.

At its best it is an uncomfortable and unsatisfactory form of shooting. Use the " patwa " as long as the daylight lasts, but do not stay in it after nightfall ; it is not worth it, for, if practised systematically throughout the night, the sportsman is bound to come to grief in the end.

As with pantherets, I could go on giving panther stories, but will have mercy on the reader, and therefore call a halt.





A FOREST LINE

## CHAPTER IX.

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### HUNTERS HUNTED.

Extract from my diary, 1887. Chindwara, C. P. :—

“23rd January. Marched to Ooprey. Found the forest lines not properly cleared here nor *minaras* (boundary-pillars) erected, though the *malguzars* (landowners) reported that the work had been completed. Will have to stay till it is done.

25th January. Inspected Rheni forests ; found a lot of damage done by villagers cutting *bambus*, *bher* and *gutoal* for their goats and buffaloes ; lot of other wood also cut. Making them pay for the damage.

26th January. Marched to Kokut—same state of affairs here. Will have to inspect every bit of these jungles.”

I was returning from a round of these inspections on the evening of the 28th, when we suddenly came on a party of Chitas, an old

female and four nearly full-grown cubs, seated on the forest line, all looking intently the other way, so that they did not see us.

They were about 200 yards away, too far for the smooth-bore which I then had in my hand, so I immediately pressed the men back, and then backed myself out of sight round the corner we had just turned, and exchanged my gun for my rifle.

The jungle on either side of the line was too dense with matted *saharu* for me to force my way through it in their direction without being heard by the quarry and, as the light was fast fading, I made up my mind to have a long shot, rather than try to get closer ; but on peering cautiously round the bend, I found that their suspicion in the other direction had been lulled, and they were now having a grand romp, rolling over each other, jumping up and clawing at the air, scampering after each other up and down the line, each scamper generally ending at a certain tree, where the pursued would halt, stand on his hind legs with his fore-paws against the trunk, looking and growling over his shoulder at the pursuer, who would then also halt and wait, till the pursued, giving the bark one final scour down with his claws as he took off, assumed the roll of pursuer ; thus, now chasing, now chased, the round game went on, for all the world like the game children call " touch-wood". It was a pretty sight, and I would have let them off scot-free, but that these animals are comparatively rare in the Central Provinces, and the few there are, are seldom seen on account of the heaviness of the jungles. So I took advantage of the nearer approach of one of them, during one of their scurries, to fire, my shot being answered by a growl, as the whole family vanished like ghosts.

Marking the spot where the one I had fired at had disappeared, we followed and found blood, but soon the darkness enveloped us and we were obliged to give up the trail for the time being.

Next morning I returned with my pack of dogs, chiefly Harriers, and put them on the trail. However, the scent was stale, and our progress was slow, until we covered about two miles, when suddenly the dogs went away with a burst of music on a burning scent. The pace now was fast for about a mile, when on rounding the shoulder of a hill, we found two Chitas together, with their backs to a rock, bailed up by the dogs ; but on seeing us they again bounded off. One of them, however, was intercepted by the dogs.

who, emboldened by our presence, attacked and killed him before he could inflict much damage. The escape of the other one was but temporary, for the dogs on taking up his trail, soon ran into him, and having learnt their own strength, did not wait for our arrival, but immediately attacked and tore him literally to pieces.

After this, we returned to where we first started the fresh scent and after casting about for a bit, away went the dogs again on a hot scent in a different direction. This was a longer run, but after about two miles, we came upon the dogs bailing up another pair of Chitas, one of them a very large one, evidently the mother, who was making savage rushes at the dogs, in defence of the young one with her. On seeing us they too made off, but the smaller one was run into and killed by the dogs before they had gone very far.

We had now entered fairly rideable country and, realizing that the killing of the larger animal was going to be a very much longer and tougher business, I took my spear and mounted my horse named Fidgit, who was a young and very fast animal. Laying on the dogs they again took up the running, and soon I saw the Chita ahead of us, going at a well-stretched canter down the bed of a *nalla*, with the dogs streaming after her; and so it went on, the Chita easily maintaining her distance; so I saw it was going to be a question of endurance, and was glad I had mounted my horse, especially as I had of late been pulled down a bit by fever.

At length we reached a still more open piece of country, so taking advantage of a temporary opening in the pack of dogs, I dashed through past them, in order to try and spear the Chita; but on seeing me coming up she changed her hitherto canter into a series of a bouncing kind of leaps, clearing the ground in a most astonishing manner, maintaining this new mode of progression without any apparent effort, for she was at the same time looking over her shoulder at me, she soon convinced me of the utter hopelessness of my endeavours, I therefore dropped behind again and left the matter to the dogs to settle.

We had proceeded in this manner for fully five miles, when I saw the Chita spring up on to a narrow ledge about eight feet up on the face of a perpendicular rock, and there come to a halt, while the dogs all surrounded the base of the rock and bayed her.





HUNTER HUNTED.





I was about three hundred yards in the rear when I saw this happen, so I immediately drew up and got off my horse and, having tethered it to a tree, I advanced with my spear to help my dogs.

The Chita now was fairly trapped, for above the rock overhung her, while below was a seething mass of enraged dogs. As I drew near, a wicked expression came over her face, and I saw she meant mischief, so I was prepared when, gathering herself together, she suddenly sprang straight at me, only to impale herself on my spear and fall back mortally wounded among the dogs, who immediately seized her in every direction and in a few seconds number four was also dead. Some of the dogs were badly bitten and scratched about the shoulders and forearms, but there were so many of them attacking at once on all sides, that the Chitas were never able to do more than to snatch and claw wildly here and there, so that the dogs, on the whole, got off much more lightly than might have been expected.

There was yet the Chita wounded by me on the night previous, for he was not among those killed by the dogs; but we were now far from the spot where we had last seen blood, and we were very tired after our several long runs, so I and the dogs returned to camp, while my shikari went to a little jungle hamlet to await my arrival next morning to hunt up the remaining Chita.

However, next morning I was late in starting as I had some office work to dispose of, and in the meanwhile the shikari on his own responsibility had followed up the trail and found the Chita dead under a rock, and brought it in to me in camp. Thus, the whole family of five had been accounted for, of whom, but for the dogs, I would only have got one—hunters “hunted” with a vengeance this. To the reader in cold blood this may seem to have been unnecessary slaughter, but in extenuation I would point out, that though plentiful enough in other parts of India, they were comparatively a *rara avis* to me and, moreover, when once on the spot among them the sport was wildly exciting and our blood was up, for each animal that was run into put up a strong fight before he was killed.

Now, a few words regarding the name of this animal. I agree with Sterndale that this is the *only* beast to whom the name “*Leopard*” can properly be applied.



The word "Leo-pard" literally means the "Spotted-lion," and was applied by the ancients to one of the larger spotted felines. Now, the only larger spotted feline known to the ancients were *Felis Jubata* and *Felis Panthera*; so it must have been to one of these two, that they applied the name "Leo-pard," obviously because of some resemblance of one of them to the Lion.

The Lion is more dog-like and differs in many ways from the Panther, who is more like a cat in which it resembles the Tiger.

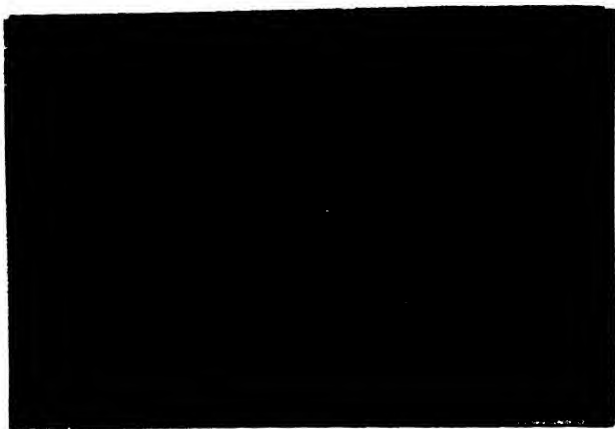
The Lion has a flatter skull, a more pronounced mane, a slim, tucked-up appearance about the loins, all of which peculiarities are markedly possessed by *Felis Jubata*, who still further resembles a dog in having a high turn of speed and only semi-retractile claws. The Panther has none of these peculiarities, while he can also be easily overtaken on a horse, whereas the speed of *Felis Jubata* is proverbial, so it is very evident that it is the latter animal that is meant by the ancients when in their writings they so often refer to the "speed of the leopard".

With all this evidence to show that *Felis Jubata* is the *only* animal to whom the name "leopard" can be properly applied, it is senseless and slipshod for people to go on, as is now the universal custom, applying this word indiscriminately to others of the spotted feline tribe. To avoid being misunderstood on account of the long-established custom of misusing the word "leopard", I have discarded this word altogether, and prefer calling *Felis Jubata* the "Chita," which is commonly understood in this sense, by all European sportsmen, though in its native sense the word "Chita" is as ambiguous and as indiscriminately used as is our English word "leopard"; for it corresponds to the Latin adjective *pardus*, and means merely "spotted". From the Hindi verb "chintna," we have "chint," the corresponding English word being "chintz," both of which apply to a certain kind of spotted cloth. When the past participle is used as an adjective or a noun the "n" is left out; thus we have "chita" meaning any thing spotted; Chital, meaning the spotted deer; Chita-bora, a certain spotted snake. Thus "chita" in Hindi, used as a noun, may mean *anything* spotted; nor is the Persian word "yuz" any the less ambiguous, for it applies equally to *Felis Panthera* as to *Felis Jubata*. But we are not here

concerned so much with the native language as with English, and as the word "Chita" used as an English word is universally understood to apply to *Felis Jubata*, I have used this term when referring to this animal rather than be misunderstood by using its more correct name, Leopard.

I once caught a young Chita, but far from being tame or tractable, he was one of the most savage and fierce little brutes I ever had to deal with ; nor did he become any better with keeping, so I was glad when after a few months I sold him, by advertisement, to a native Raja.

A Chita's head, as he advances in the twilight, certainly does look remarkably like that of a lion, so much so, that I was firmly convinced once, in the Seoni district, that I had fired at a lion of whom I often heard the older inhabitants of the neighbourhood speak as having existed there, but on the animal I fired at being recovered, it proved to be a large male Chita.



## CHAPTER X.

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### DEATH OF OLD MAN JACK.

He was an old tiger whom we nick-named "Old Man Jack," after a worthy sportsman who had wounded him. As I was present at both the wounding and at the death of this tiger two years later, I will proceed to an account of both incidents.

"Jack" the original was one of those men with an exalted idea of his position and personal value, and on this occasion, among others, he selected me to cater some shooting for him.

I had just been trying after a very large tiger who had lately come into the district from outside ; but he was evidently an old hand, for he refused to take any of my baits. I did my best to get the tiger to kill one of my buffs for J.'s edification, but it was of no use.

So we gave him up for the time being and went after bears, of which we got several, including some large cubs, one of which bit me on my finger while trying to catch it. In the last beat, however, I saw something yellow going towards J., and in a little while there was a shot followed by a succession of roars, and then another shot.

As we were both seated on the ground, I rushed forward so as to be of help if necessary, and was just in time to see a very large male

tiger rushing down a road way in the direction in which we had placed our horses. I tried to get in a shot, but he was too far.

J. then appeared in great excitement and said that he had wounded an enormous tiger which had come quite close to him in the long grass before he saw it and, on being hit by a shell, the tiger had reared up and then rushed away, not seeing J. who was behind a tree.

The first part of the tiger's course being on open ground we followed on till we reached the horse-keepers, who then told us that they had seen the tiger strike off the road up a foot path into the jungle—luckily for them; and at the spot indicated we found a great deal of blood, from the quality of which I felt certain that the wound was not in a fatal spot, though I kept my opinion to myself.

As we had moved our camp that day, our elephants had gone on ahead, so we had now to track on foot.

In this there was not much difficulty at first, as the blood trail was clear and the under-growth fairly open. My companion was very anxious not to lose the tiger, and in his anxiety urged us with proposals which, when the blood trail finally led into a dense patch of grass, would be bound to bring us to grief. It is on occasions such as this that inexperienced sportsmen are extremely apt to get their men into trouble, by thoughtlessness for their welfare. At last my patience became exhausted and I gave him a bit of my mind.

I have frequently noticed that men, who have been accustomed to shooting tigers only off elephants, when required to deal with tigers on foot, often quite lose their heads.

I then had the patch of grass ringed in by men upon trees and found that there were no tracks on the other side of the tiger having gone out, so there was no doubt as to where he was; while the agitation among the animals, birds and squirrels within the patch showed us very clearly that the tiger had plenty of life in him and was moving about.

We fired off guns and, by other means, tried to force him to leave the grass but without success; and as the evening came on we were obliged to leave him till next morning when we could return with our elephants.

Next morning, we entered the patch on our elephants and found that the tiger had laid up in a little gully hidden in dense grass, so that, had we persisted in following him on foot, some of us would have been bound to have been killed. He had evidently stayed there several hours, for the blood had stopped flowing before he left it—thus giving us the slip, for we now had nothing by which to follow him. Nevertheless, "J." was *certain* that the tiger would die and left orders for all the jungles to be searched for the recovery of his body. Well, the tiger was never found, and this bore out my opinion, namely, that a wounded tiger that is not found within 600 yards of the place at which he is wounded usually makes good his escape—may be to die—but the man who shot him will rarely see him again.

By the escape of this tiger, hangs another tale.

Two years afterwards, reports came in to me that a very large tiger, somewhat crippled in the back, had taken up his quarters in this very jungle and had, on several occasions, stopped people on foot-paths. Many sportsmen tried after this brute, but he would never kill any of the buffs tied out for him.

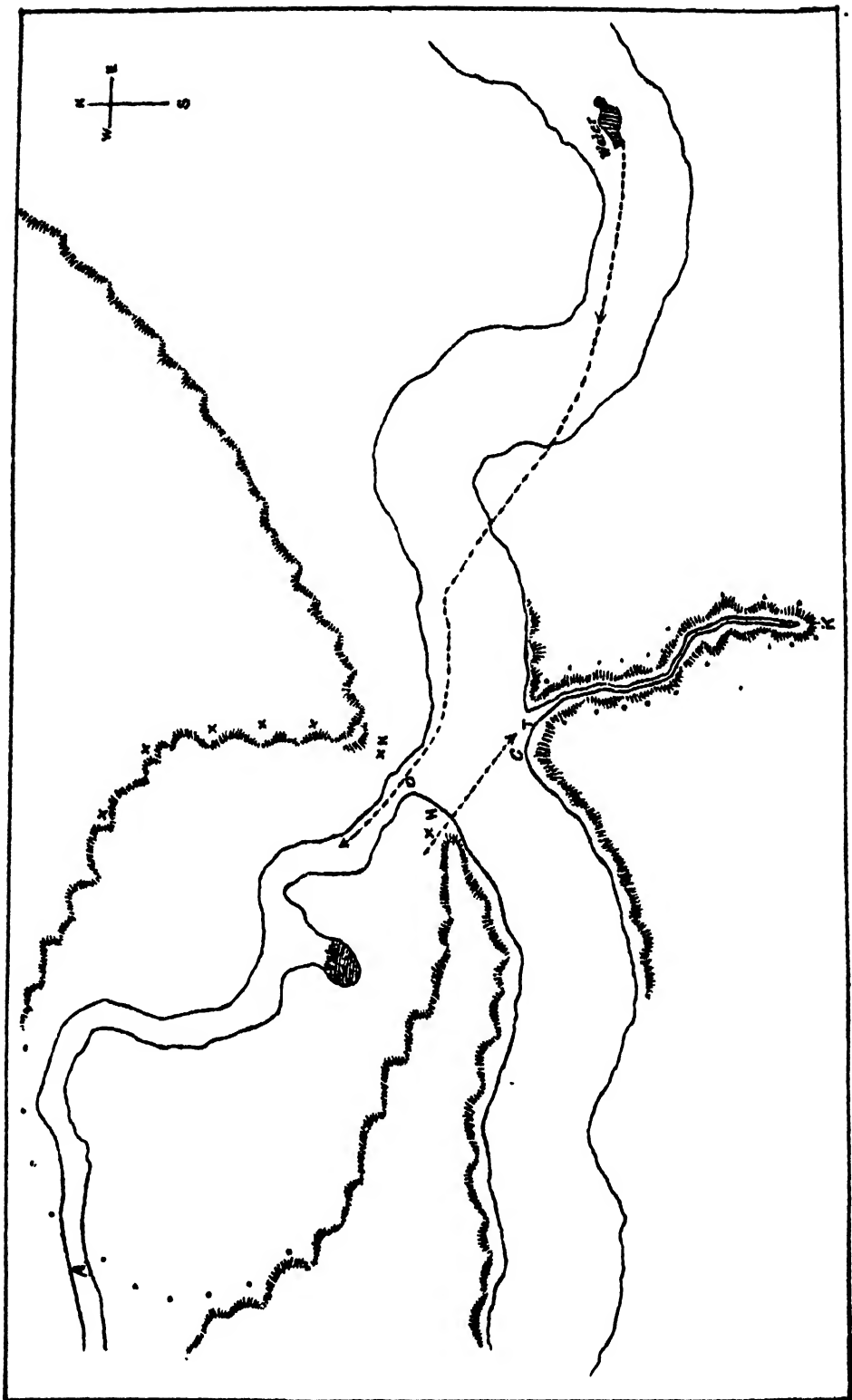
On one occasion X, the D. S. P., and I went out to try especially for this tiger; but though we got other tigers and some bears, we could never get this particular tiger to take one of our buffs; he would come down and drink at the same water, and on one occasion he killed a cheetle within a few yards of the buff, but would not touch the latter.

From his character, and the fact that he was partially crippled, we were sure that this tiger was the same one which "J." had wounded two years before, in this very place.

One morning X and I, each started out from camp in different directions ostensibly after blue-bull but, I think, really with a secret hope of coming across the tracks of "Old Man Jack," as we had now named the tiger, for this was X.'s last day out with me, as a report of a dacoity had come in which necessitated his presence elsewhere.

I made straight for the nearest river which, though its springs were all dried up, yet here and there contained among its basalt rocks some catchment water; near one of these pools I found the footprints of some jungle dogs, which considerably dashed my hopes, for tigers





DHUGA RANGE, WARDAH.

usually leave jungles frequented by jungle dogs, as the latter drive away all the animals on which the tiger feeds. Further on, however, to my delight, I came across, by another pool, the fresh footmarks of "Old Man Jack," which I had no difficulty in recognizing for they were exactly two fingers over my hand's span.

The river ran east and west (see sketch). I followed the tracks which led straight up the bed of the river to the west, and then went off up a smaller branch of the river to the right.

The latter *nalla* ran through the bed of the valley densely covered with bambu jungle and grass, and also contained water; while the numerous tracks of all kinds of animals showed that the tiger would have plenty of inducement to stay in it and make this his head-quarters for some time to come. I returned in high spirits to camp with the news, and when X returned, bringing a blue-bull with him, he agreed to postpone his departure on the next day for a few hours, in order to try after our old friend.

Next morning, we started with 25 beaters, for we could not get any more, there being no villages in this neighbourhood; however, I considered these sufficient, having seen the ground. We made up our minds that the beat should be a quiet one, so as to avoid frightening the tiger for he was an old hand, who, the moment he recognized that he was being beaten in the ordinary way, would, in all probability, refuse to go forward in the direction in which his past experience of being beaten would tell him that danger awaited him. So we forbade the beaters to shout, and gave them each two short pieces of bambu about two feet long, with instructions not to shout but to click their two pieces of bambu together while advancing in the line. The tiger would thus associate the clicking noise only with those of wood-cutters, which he hears every day of his life, and would, as he always does in such cases, quietly move off in the direction where there was no noise, without being in the least bit frightened or flurried.

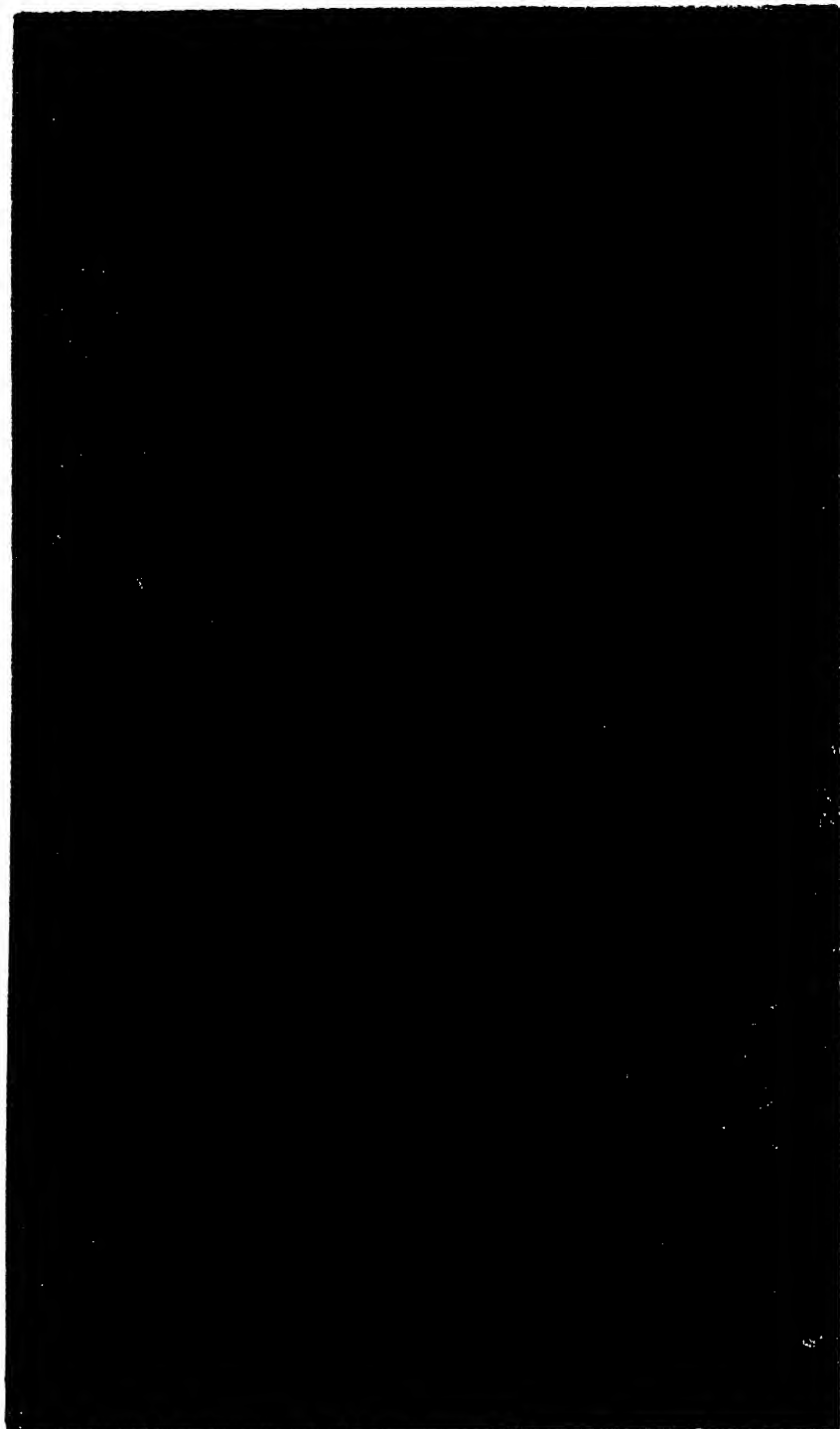
On arriving at the locality, the first thing we did was to examine both ends of the valley (at "O" and "A"), but could not find any traces of the tiger having left it, so we concluded that my supposition of the previous day that he would make this his head-quarters was correct and that he was in there now.



We decided to beat him down the valley (from "A" to "O"), the guns being placed on either side of the mouth of the *nalla* (at "O"). We drew lots for places and it fell to me to sit on the left ("H") while X sat to my right commanding the shoulder of the hill in that direction. To my left there was a perpendicular cliff, down which not even a monkey could go, so I was able to dispense with placing stops in this direction; but to the right of X it was necessary to place five stops, as there was a likelihood of the tiger trying to break through in this direction, for the jungle here was very thick and the hill sloping; but they were ordered to keep perfectly silent unless the tiger tried to break by them. I also placed a man (at "C") on the top of the opposite cliff to my left rear, from whence he could see a long way behind both X and myself, giving him orders to keep a sharp lookout when we fired, in order to see where the tiger went in case he got away wounded.

After we had put up the stops we sent our orderlies to bring up the beaters, and in about three-quarters of an hour we heard the click-click of the advancing beaters; at the same time an enormous male tiger suddenly appeared out of the grass in front of me and stood broadside on, about 40 yards off. Thinking that perhaps I would not get a good chance in the grass of getting in the second barrel, I pulled both barrels at him at once, but he unfortunately moved suddenly as I was pressing the triggers, and the bullets struck him a couple of inches too far back. He rushed roaring under my tree, and out behind across the river-bed, where X also had a shot at him. This was where the man, placed on the cliff behind me, came in useful, for when I turned round, I saw him looking intently in the direction in which the wounded tiger had gone, and after a while he beckoned to me vigorously. When I got down from my ladder I found plenty of blood under my tree where the tiger had passed, and it was of a frothy character showing that the wound was in a vital spot, probably through the lungs. I also saw that the blood was on the grass and leaves on *both* sides of the tiger's course, showing that the bullets had gone right through his body and had come out the other side. The man at "C" called out and said that the tiger was very sick and had gone up the narrow gully at "T"; this we found to be true by the blood marks at "T", so we at once placed some





No more left.





men at "D" to watch the mouth of the gully ; then, with the remainder of the men, we went round by "R" on to the plateau above and ringed in the gully with men upon trees, and the fun began.

X and I at first went to "P", but here the bank was perpendicular and about 50 feet down to the bed of the gully, which was covered with cactus bushes, in which the wounded tiger had taken refuge. The opposite bank was more sloping. Now commenced a fusillade of rocks and stones on to the cactus bushes below, and soon the men on the opposite bank called out that the tiger was moving up, so X and I ran up to the head of the gully to cut him off, and as we reached the spot we came face to face with the huge beast, who, as soon as he saw us, at once charged us with a roar, but losing heart he stopped and turned back to escape, when one of our bullets broke his back and rendered him incapable of doing any mischief or of moving from the spot, but in his frantic rage he tore up and bit everything within his reach, including rocks, stones and roots of trees, as well as his own paws. We stood for a few moments awestruck before this appalling exhibition of fury, while the infuriated brute was making frantic efforts to get at us, dragging his paralyzed hindquarters behind him and filling the air with thundering roars.

It was an excellent opportunity for a snap-shot with a camera, but as we had not got one, we soon put the poor beast out of his pain.

However, we came well out of a dangerous business. Had the animal been a female instead of a male, it would never have turned back in its charge, in which case we might not have come off so well as we did.

On examining the beast we found an old wound on its back, where the skin had also puckered up ; this was evidently where "J." had wounded it when out with me two years before. X had now to return to duty, this being the last of several adventures which I and my old chum had together, and I missed his cheery companionship greatly when he left me. This story goes to illustrate the way in which even the most cunning old veteran of the jungles may sometimes be brought to book by the use of a little observation.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### HINTS ON STILL HUNTING.

From time immemorial "stalking," in the sense of searching for game, has been a form of hunting in which *stealth* and *noiselessness* have been considered to be the essential conditions to ultimate success.

This is a time-honoured and hoary-headed theory, so the writer is aware that he is running against a very solid wall of prejudice when he asserts that the employment of these unconditional methods of stalking game in India is *wrong*.

Any departure from the normal in the jungles is a sign of danger to its denizens, and stealth in any form is at once a sign of danger being at hand.

A feline, with its low stature, soft pads, quick eyesight, and wonderful agility and strength, is specially endowed by nature to practise stealth with success. But, on the other hand, all wild animals are constantly on the watch for these signs of danger, so what chance has the human hunter, with his tall stature, comparatively clumsy movements, and hampered perhaps with a heavy rifle; what chance has he, except that of a lucky accident, of outwitting, by these methods alone, animals whose every sense has been sharpened by constant practice in outwitting a far more gifted foe.

Again, there are some sportsmen, generally the younger bloods, who think that by racing round the jungles, covering the greatest possible amount of ground in a given time, they will see more animals; and they do. They *see* in this manner a great many animals, but only a fleeting glimpse of their vanishing flags, a confused rush of frightened animals, among which it is impossible to distinguish which is the stag or which is the doe, so that it is out of the question to fire; thus, the walking-race ends in the hunter coming back empty-handed, tired and disgusted, having *seen* plenty of animals; but what was the use of that when his object was to shoot them.

We are therefore not to creep and we are not to run—then what else are we to do? My answer is: "Imitate as far as possible the

habits of the animal you are stalking ; make no attempt to conceal yourself when searching for him, but make him believe that the movements and noise you make are those of one of his own species, and he will pay no more attention to you than he would to the movements of one of his companions, for whom he mistakes you."

For eight months in the year, the greater majority of the trees in India being of a deciduous nature, the ground in forest areas is covered with a carpet of leaves, more or less thick and crackly according to the season ; under such conditions it is impossible for either man or beast to walk noiselessly, and to attempt to do so is only to advertise one's identity.

Animals, in their normal state, when walking over such ground, are accustomed to the noise made among the dry leaves by the moving feet of their companions, and in consequence pay no attention to it. But let there be an isolated snap of a stick, followed by silence, and then another crack and silence again, such as would be bound to occur now and again when a man attempted to move silently over such ground, and their suspicion is at once aroused to the fact that something stealthy is on the prowl, for it is a departure from the regular normal shuffling noise made by their companions.

Again, a deer, observing the bobbing or stealthy movements of a feline, gallops quickly away and all other animals, passed by him, observe his rapid flight and know by this departure from the normal that danger is at hand, and flee likewise.

Therefore, the first two rules of the jungles to remember are : that all wild animals consider as signs of immediate danger—

(i) Any *quick* movement.

(ii) Any *stealthy* movement.

They are ever on the watch for these signs of danger, so always be careful to avoid giving them cause for alarm in either of these ways. If you see that an animal has observed you, make no attempt to conceal yourself, but just slowly move off in a different direction, as if you took not the slightest interest in him, at the same time edging casually nearer and nearer as you move about, but on no account turn round to look direct at the animal, for all wild animals are very quick in detecting and understanding the purport of such a move. Pretend you have not seen him, but watch him out of the corner of your eye



all the same, and the chances are that he will put you down as something quite harmless, and will allow you to approach to within easy shooting distance, provided you have also observed the next two important rules, namely, those in connection with the human voice and human effluvia.

The slightest sound of the human voice, unless used in a very correct imitation of the call of some harmless wild animal, or the slightest taint in the air of the smell of a human being, is at once recognized by wild animals, and away they go. There are exceptions of course, as with antelope, who are accustomed to seeing and smelling human beings all round them, and also with the bear, whose hearing and sight are both very defective, though his powers of scent are very keen.

Therefore, always work against the wind ; for instance, if the wind is blowing at right-angles to the course from east to west, then work round on the west side. Obvious as this may seem, many sportsmen systematically disregard it, and often, after an infinite amount of trouble in working up to the spot, find that their quarry has mysteriously disappeared ; the reason simply being that the sportsman in the first instance took no notice of the direction of the wind, and having with great pains worked round into its course, the news of his presence was at once carried by it to the quarry, who promptly made off.

Generally speaking, wild animals, *who have not been previously harried*, are not quick in identifying a human being by his form or figure alone, provided his dress and head-gear are suitable to the jungles around. What they do identify him by are :—

- (1) his smell,
- (2) his voice,
- (3) his eyes,
- (4) his demeanour,
- (5) his face, but in a very much lesser degree.

It is on such hypothesis that the above theory of stalking is based.

There is something in the human eyes which all wild animals are very quick in identifying ; hence the necessity of keeping them turned well away or, better still, keeping them half closed while the animals are actually looking at you, if close by. Over and over again I have had wild animals within twenty-five yards, staring hard

at me, but as I had my eyes nearly closed, they failed to identify me with any thing dangerous, and quietly walked on unconcerned.

On one occasion, a tiger stared me straight in the face in this manner but, failing to discover anything suspicious, changed his gaze and looked back over his shoulder in the direction of the on-coming beaters, which was the opportunity for which I was waiting to enable me to raise my rifle to my shoulder unseen, and plunge a bullet into the most vital part of him, his neck. A full beard, or a khaki-coloured Balaclava cap, form a most efficient disguise to the features, provided that attention is also paid, as above, to the eyes.

Now, let us take the case of a single sportsman camped in the neighbourhood of an extensive piece of forest which, he knows, contains a large number of animals whom he is anxious to stalk. He should arrive at the spot by break of dawn, for at this time, and for the next three hours, the animals will still be on the move themselves, and, therefore, less likely to take any notice of his movements, provided he is moving up wind in the same manner and at almost the same pace as themselves, that is, at about half a mile an hour. He may travel as fast as he likes going there, but having arrived, let him make up his mind definitely that he will only go a certain distance and no further, according to the time he has at his disposal; he will then not be tempted so much to travel faster than he ought. Animals, when they are grazing or browsing, generally only travel at the rate of about half a mile an hour, so let the hunter do likewise. For instance, supposing he has six hours at his disposal for stalking purposes, let him make up his mind, unalterably, that he will on no account stalk more than three miles of country in this time. By going at this very slow pace, his eyes will have time to take in all his surroundings, to closely scrutinize each and every object, passing over nothing unobserved. The walk then, instead of being a hot perspiring scramble, will be a most enjoyable one, for he will also have leisure to appreciate all the varied beauties of nature that he passes, and ultimately, when the time comes for him to shoot, he will find himself steady, cool and collected. Whereas, on the other hand, if he travels quickly, his eyes will pass over unobserved many objects of interest, among them perhaps a fine stag who stares wonderingly at him only forty yards away, who perceiving that he has not been

observed, steals quietly away among the bushes, without the hunter ever becoming aware of his presence. How often does it happen thus, that game, having had their suspicions aroused by some *faux pas*—some stealthy or rapid movement—on the part of a sportsman, are alertly watching with anxious inquisitiveness, long before he is aware of their presence, only to dash away the moment they perceive that they are discovered.

Therefore, go slow ; never mind your feet, *you may make as much noise as you like with them when the animals themselves are doing the same*, it serves the better to deceive them ; play the confidence trick, pretending you are quite harmless, and you will be put down as such if only you act your part well and be in no hurry over it. Man cannot hope to compete with felines, so let him use his brains instead—if he has any.

To stalk by stealth with most sportsmen is a religion, and to these it will seem like flying in the face of Providence to adopt the methods recommended by me here, but I have tried every method during my forty years of jungle life, and found that none paid better than the one I have described.

I have frequently walked in this manner over dry teak leaves that rattled like empty tins at each step, right into the middle of herds of Bison, Sambar and Cheetle, before I was discovered by them. In Mysore, on one occasion I once walked thus right in among a herd of somnolent Bison, and almost kicked one up with my foot before the herd would deign to take any notice of me.

My remarks regarding the unconcerned strolling gait of the sportsman, apply to :—

- (i) When neither the sportsman nor the quarry have sighted each other ; that is to say, when the sportsman is *searching* for the quarry.
- (ii) When the sportsman is aware that quarry have discovered his presence and are watching him, though not yet actually alarmed.

Wild animals, having far keener powers of sight, scent and hearing than man, are much more likely to be the first to discover the presence of the sportsman, hence the necessity for the latter to adopt a mode of progression which will be least likely to give them cause

for alarm. But if the sportsman happens to be the first to see the quarry without being seen himself, then by all means let him employ stealth and the use of cover, if practicable, to enable him to come within shooting distance.

But if the sportsman observes that the quarry are aware of his presence and are watching him, though not yet actually alarmed, then let him make it his *first* business to lull their suspicions by acting in full view of them in such a manner as to cause them to put him down as something quite harmless. For this reason on no account, while they are watching you, disappear from their sight, for such an action would rightly be considered by them as an act of "stealth", at which they would at once take alarm. Make it a point, therefore, though moving obliquely away from them, of keeping well within their sight as long as they are watching you; when you see that their suspicions have been quite lulled by your apparently harmless demeanour, and that they are no longer paying any attention to you but have gone on grazing, then you may gradually drop out of sight, and having done so, make use of stealth and cover to any extent you are able, never for one moment forgetting to move always against the wind; the direction of the latter can always be ascertained by kicking or throwing up a little dust, or by wetting your finger and holding it up to the wind. If cover is not available, or the nature of the ground renders stealth impracticable, then resort to the confidence trick, and having first lulled their suspicions by a little by-play at a distance, edge closer and closer up to them, but very gradually, until you are near enough for a shot.

Besides their keener qualities, aforementioned, there are among a herd of animals great many more pairs of keen eyes on the look-out, than on the side of the sportsman, so it stands to reason that their chance of being the first to discover the sportsman is correspondingly greater, and as they generally gauge the harmful or harmless nature of the uncertain object under their scrutiny not so much by its form or figure as by its gait and general demeanour, I cannot, under these circumstances, emphasize too strongly the necessity for sportsmen, adopting the slow, very slow, halting and aimless gait of a browsing animal when he is searching for them, keeping his gun well out of sight, tucked in well between his arm and body.

By thus loafing slowly along, a far greater number of good animals will be picked up, than by wildly tearing round the jungles, while you will also be able to *pick* your shots, and your aim will be far more cool and steady.

Only a short while ago, while stalking a good stag Samber in the Doon, I passed, undetected, in this manner within twenty-five yards to the leeward of a large herd of Cheetle, most of whom were lying down. The ground was thickly covered with dead leaves, so I could not help making a lot of noise with my feet as I slowly mooned past them ; but they evidently took my movements for those of one of their own party, for, though I was in full view all the time, none of them took any notice of me, except one old doe, who looked at me lazily over her shoulder for a time and then, apparently satisfied with the innocence of my gait and general demeanour, scratched her ear with her hindfoot, and went on grazing.

Many trivialities of camp life support the theory of this method of stalking. Why is it that we so often see animals when we are most unprepared and least expect to see them ? It is because the very fact that we *are* unprepared to see them is the very reason why we do see them, for at such times we are not creeping and crawling or rushing about after them, and putting them all on the *qui vive* for miles ahead of us. The astonishment on such occasions is usually mutual. How often have many of us, when travelling with a light camp, experienced these unexpected meetings with wild animals, while simply enjoying the beauties of Nature of an early morning among the jungle thickets on the outskirts of the camp.

I made it a rule never to peregrinate without taking a gun with me, one barrel loaded with a solid soft lead bullet, and the other with number four shot : in this manner I have frequently picked up game quite close to camp.

Never commence a stalk down the wind, for, if you do, the wind will carry the news of your presence a mile ahead and warn all the animals in front long before you reach them, so that they all steal off quietly, and all the sportsman sees are hundreds of fresh footmarks and still warm droppings.

How often do we hear, over and over again, the same old speech from young sportsmen returning to camp : " Oh, I saw *such* a lot of





fresh footmarks and droppings of animals, the place must be teeming with them, but strange to say I never saw a single one." Wind again my young friend, you must have forgotten all about it and worked down with the wind, for by your own showing, the animals were there only a few minutes before your arrival.

Animals thus alarmed sneak away quietly, or, if they are still uncertain, will wait and watch anxiously with craning necks and ears, only to dash away the moment they catch sight of the object of their alarm.

Never continue in the direction in which an alarmed herd has fled, even though it be "up-wind" for it's not worth while, for it stands to reason they will be on the watch for you, as also all other herds passed by them during their flight. The odds, under such conditions, are too great; for all these other herds also will be on the look out, and will fly immediately in every direction on the approach of the sportsman, alarming in turn other herds again whom they pass. Thus in a few minutes the whole country for miles round will be put on the *qui vive* and the animals in every direction on the look out, watching for the appearance of the sportsman, whose ends will thus be entirely defeated for that day by his one preliminary blunder of having, in the first instance, followed in the wake of an alarmed herd. Therefore, when a frightened herd blunders off, immediately change your course, obliquely or to one side of that taken by the alarmed animals, and the chances are that other herds, frightened by the latter, will walk straight into you, not dreaming of danger ahead of them, but only of that in their rear whence they were alarmed, while also remember that most deer have a habit of moving in *circles*.

If, on arriving at the southern extremity of a block of jungle in which you intend to stalk, you find that the wind is blowing from south to north, it will be well worth your while to fag right round to the northern extremity before entering the block, and then to work down from north to south against the wind. Wild animals also, when they have a choice, generally graze up-wind, so that the wind might carry its warning to them of any lurking foe that may be lying in ambush for them. So if the sportsman is also proceeding up-wind, the chances are that he will first see the grazing quarry



when they have their backs to him, and is thus less likely to be discovered by them first, which may give him certain great advantages.

If there are several sportsmen available for stalking a heavy bit of jungle, it will be a very great advantage if they work together, proceeding slowly in line about three hundred yards apart, for in this manner they are certain to drive herds of deer from one to the other; for deer, especially Cheetle, as stated elsewhere, are in the habit of moving in circles when avoiding danger in thick cover, and are then more off their guard in regard to danger ahead of them, their minds being preoccupied with the danger in their rear from which they have just escaped.

My remarks in this chapter apply chiefly to deer of all kinds in the heavy "maidan" jungles of India, and also in a lesser degree to bison, but not in their entirety to wild buffaloes, for the latter are in the habit of frequently charging, either in bluff or earnest, any unfamiliar object that comes before their view.

My remarks also apply, with obvious exceptions, to antelope. Where these animals are familiar with the sight and smell of human beings, as they usually are, the "confidential method" is the most successful way of stalking them; indeed, it is often the only method when, as so often happens, no cover or other means are available.

If you want to do the thing in style, blacken your face, wrap a coolie's dirt-soiled sheet round your shoulders and body, carry a large load of leaves or grass on your head, and proceed slowly, decked in this manner, down a familiar footpath that may lead close by the animals. They are accustomed to see natives go in this manner, day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, along these regular footpaths and, in consequence, pay no attention to them, and will allow the sportsman to pass thus within thirty yards without becoming alarmed.

If no footpath is available, then discard the load only, don some kind of common native head-gear, and moon slowly about like a native working in a field, never once directly looking in their direction, until you have gradually edged up near enough for a shot. Better still, lead a horse *very slowly* past their position, keeping

as much as possible out of sight on the further side of his body ; or else drive a herd of cattle a hundred yards or so to one side of them.

Should you elect to stalk them under available cover, be very careful about the direction of the wind, for, in spite of all that is often said to the contrary, they have very keen powers of scent, and the scent of a human being coupled with his conspicuous absence from view, will at once send them bounding away in alarm. Otherwise no attention need be paid to the wind when working in their full view.

A single isolated bush on a bare plain in the vicinity of a herd, even though out of range, may sometimes be utilised successfully in the following manner : Let the sportsman with a party of men pass by the bush, and in passing let him drop behind it while the men pass on without halting. The animals, not having noticed the action of the hunter, will continue watching the party of men, who should then by a wide turning movement circle round into the further side of them, and then commence to approach towards them with a very slow zig-zag movement, which should have the effect of making the antelope move off quietly or otherwise, in the other direction, with a good chance of their passing within easy range of the ambushed hunter. All these and other dodges of stalking antelope are well known, so I will not go more fully into them. But keep it in mind, about the footpath, it is a sure and useful tip.

Now, a few words about the colour of the sportsman's dress. The word " khaki ", in the sense of being a distinct colour, has come to stay and is now universally understood, so I need not describe it. It is, in my opinion, the most satisfactory colour of any for a sportsman's dress, for it harmonizes exactly with the usual colour of the ground, dry grass and the branches and stems of trees, which he always has about him under almost every variety of circumstances of sport ; so if he is dressed in khaki he is certain to be in keeping with a large proportion of his surroundings, during the usual shooting season in the plains of India.

Trousers of khaki, and the coat of a slightly darker or even a greenish tinge, will help somewhat to break at a distance the outline of the human form, but I do not consider this to be by any means absolutely necessary, for reasons already mentioned. For the head, a khaki covered pith-hat of the now well-known " Tent-club "

pattern, is the best all-round hat I know. The khaki hat helps to disguise the shape of the human head, as well as its colour; so on no account go bare headed, especially if the hair be dark, for a black-headed object moving about would be fatal. A few green leaves fastened round the crown of the helmet, with a piece of string wound round them to prevent them wagging about, make the hat still more an effective disguise, while the use of a Balaclava cap has already been mentioned. Boots do not matter much, suit your own taste; hobnails are good all round but make more noise, but smooth soles



or rope soles are dangerously slippery on grassy hillsides or on pine leaves; in fact, on these it is often impossible to keep on one's feet in them.

Before closing this chapter I might remark that though some portions thereof may, occasionally, appear to be repetitions, a closer inspection will show that it is the same thing reviewed under different circumstances or from a different standpoint. While hostile critics also may, sometimes, be able to extract phrases from different portions which appear to directly contradict each other, but this will not be the case if they are read with their proper contexts. Treat the chapter as a whole, and then say whether or not it contains some useful methods in spite of their being, in part, the direct opposites of the methods usually advocated and practised in this kind of sport

## CHAPTER XII.

### BISON STALKING IN THE SATPURAS.

"The Satpuras!" What delightful memories of my early forest life are called up by those beautiful evergreen covered ranges, for it was among them that I first opened my forest career in the prime of my youth, hope, strength and confidence, with all the rosy promises of life before me.

How emblematic of man's life on earth is the view of a panorama from one of these hill tops : the nearer portions brightened with picturesque trivialities, fresh and green, fading away gradually as the distance increases, until the sterner configuration of the landscape becomes more evident ; while, further again, only the grim outlines are discernable, beyond which everything fades away into the dim grey vista of the vast unknown. Grey, alas ! very grey ; brightened perhaps only, at the last moment, by the glories kindled by a setting sun, and then all is darkness.

Something perhaps of such an idea in connection with these hills appears to have been entertained by the pious Hindu, for he has named a portion of them "Maha-deo," meaning "The Great Divinity".

On the Mahadeo Hills is now a populous European "Hill Station," called Pachmarrie ; but when I first visited this beautiful spot, on the site of which Pachmarrie has since been built, forty years ago, there was only one house there, which had been built by Captain Forsyth, called by him "Bison Lodge".

I was stationed in this neighbourhood for some time in the year 1867, being employed in supervising sleeper works for the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, which was then under construction.

During my spare time I amused myself by constructing also a "Public Garden," the "public" being at my Head-quarters at Hoshungabad, who took a keen personal interest in it when my experiments in growing English vegetables turned out a great success, potatoes especially growing to an enormous size, for I had

no lack of good manure, for large quantities of it were to be had for the taking, from the numerous Gowlie's *haitees* around, as they foolishly made no use of it. The ground was virgin soil, which I broke up with an English plough harnessed to an elephant! I wonder how often this has been done?

This garden was a great source of anxiety to me, as well as amusement, for I had great difficulty in preventing bison and other wild animals from breaking into it, for large herds of them wandered at night all round my house and garden; so it can be imagined that the present site of Pachmarrie was, in those days, a pretty wild and primitive spot, for bison, of all animals, are particularly shy beasts and are usually only found far from all human habitations.

The jungles around swarmed with them, especially the forests of Bori, Hirapolla, Roli Ghat, Dhorni, Salar and Delakhari.

While inspecting some work in the latter forest, near the source of the Pench river, I saw, one morning, a huge herd of bison defiling over a neighbouring range; as they were proceeding in single file, I was able to count them and found that there were 37 all together, with some splendid bulls among them.

I had but little time to indulge in sport, however, for I had at that time working under me 30 elephants, 84 pairs of draft buffaloes and bullocks, and about 500 coolies and sawyers, employed in cutting down, dressing, dragging and sawing huge logs of wood, into proportions suitable for sleepers.

Strange to say, a short while ago my daughters were in this neighbourhood, and saw the remains of the plants, and huge old logs, still lying about, rotting and half buried in jungle growth, which were pointed out to them by an old man who claimed to remember me, saying that he had been one of my trackers nearly forty years ago. That there are yet some game left in these jungles is proved by the fact that the girls, on this trip, shot some fine samber stags and other deer, also fired at a running tiger but did not secure him. The bison in these areas are now preserved by stringent restrictions in regard to shooting them, for which reason I have not withheld from naming these places.

Having to check daily the work of such a large establishment was no light task. But at last, however, some public holidays came





round, and I found that I would have three whole days to myself which I determined to devote to the securing of some of the splendid bison heads that were to be had in those jungles.

I did not want ordinary bulls, which I could have picked up by just simply loafing about. I wanted really good bulls, and these could only be secured by making a special search for their footmarks and having found them, by tracking them up. A big bull bison is an enormously heavy-bodied animal, and, in consequence of his weight, his feet leave a more or less clear track on the ground wherever he goes, for which reason, unlike deer, his tracks can be followed with tolerable facility with a little practice and knowledge of wood-craft, to which a little local knowledge is always of great help. Bison also graze a bit faster than do deer, especially when it is nearing their cud-chewing time; with these exceptions my method of stalking bison is exactly the same as that already described in stalking deer.

I sent out, a week previously, three batches of trackers to locate and mark down really good bulls, with orders to report on certain dates at certain *rendezvous*, to which places I afterwards sent men to fetch them in to wherever I happened to be camped at the time. I promised them rewards if they put me on to really good bulls, and the reverse if they took me after a bad one. These men knew me well, and knew that I would keep my word and would deal with them exactly as I said, which put them on their mettle and they worked splendidly.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the works, the jungles of course had been disturbed. But at about ten miles from Delakhari was a spring, called by the natives "Gular Jhira," which was situated at the head of a gully which ran up nearly to the centre of an extensive piece of table-land forest, covered chiefly with sal and bambus. I had visited this spot once during one of my hurried tours of inspection, and found tracks of bison all over the place, among them those of some splendid bulls. It was well away from the disturbed area, so I determined to pitch my first camp at Gular Jhira, and from thence to decide where I should move afterwards according to circumstances.

Accordingly, on the day previous to my departure, I sent on to this spot a spare roll of bedding, some pots and pans and a few stores, a



servant and a number of coolies, the latter to serve in bringing in the remains of such trophies as were shot.

While stalking, I take with me only two men, generally trackers if after bison, so that when an animal is shot a piece of newspaper is hung up over it to scare off jackals, etc., and one of the two men is sent back to camp to fetch other men to cut up and carry away such portions of the trophy as are required, while I, with the remaining man, proceed in the meanwhile in further quest. Should another animal be killed, after hanging up a piece of newspaper as before, we both return to camp, having, I consider, done quite well enough for one day; the second tracker then guiding another batch of men to cut up and bring in the quarry number two.

There are some sportsmen who insist in dragging about a party of men with them, to follow, as they say, at a distance; but in thick forests it is impossible for such a party at a distance to keep the sportsman in sight and, consequently, they are constantly losing each other, with the inevitable result of whispering, talking, and even shouting to find out the whereabouts of each other, all of which is fatal in this form of sport.

Sportsmen will find that two men are quite sufficient if he makes his arrangements previously, as I have described. One of them can carry a spare rifle, and the other a water-bottle and a packet of victuals sufficient for the day, and there will be no confusion whatever.

I believe in reserving all one's strength for the actual stalk, and for this reason I generally use a horse in proceeding to the scene, taking a spare man to guide the horse-keeper back to camp, when I have done with him.

On the evening previous to my departure, one of the trackers came in according to arrangement, and stated that he and two of his companions had located three herds of bison, each of which contained a good bull—the nearest herd, about six miles off, was being followed up and watched by the other two men.

Having a long way to go and wishing to arrive at the spot by daybreak, I made a start on horseback at 3 A.M., using a lantern to light our way, taking with me two trackers, my horse-keeper and a spare local man to guide the latter to Gular Jhira, when I had done with him.

It was a weird procession as we threaded our way through the dark jungles, led by a tracker who guided us, with the unerring instinct of his race, by the most open portions, known only to him and a few others of his own kidney.

Herds of animals every now and again blundered away in the dark through the jungles ; a sounder of wild pig next went scampering with much grunting and squealing, across our path, while further on we were entertained with a noisy argument, conducted apparently between a bear and a hyæna. I was puzzled to think what the bone of contention could have been, but it was too dark to make out anything, so we continued our silent way.

At length a gentle breeze, which usually heralds the break of day at the commencement of the hot weather, began to stir the air, and the first grey tinges of dawn appeared in the sky. The jungle cocks were crowing in every direction, and bird life in general, with a brightening dawn, awoke to a twittering melody.

With the growing light and freshened air, my spirits rose high, for *khubber* was good and I was young and all the world was fair ! The sun had not yet risen above the horizon, when the tracker announced that we were near the spot where he had last seen the bison, though they had probably wandered on again some distance during the night. However, there was no knowing, so I dismounted, and having started my horse off to camp, pushed on with the two trackers only, one of whom guided me to an improvised hut in which the men left to watch the bison had slept during the night. These, however, were *non est*, having had nearly an hour's start of us in following up the night tracks of the bison. On taking up the latter, we found it all plain sailing for us, for the men ahead of us knowing that we would follow had made the trail clear, by breaking twigs, etc., as they went along, so we were able to follow at a fast rate.

I was delighted to see, among the footprints of the herd, the marks of a huge old bull, so we pushed on rapidly in the joyous anticipation of securing a fine trophy.

However, it was a full hour before we came up with the men ahead of us ; they had not yet come up with the bison, but by going on ahead had saved me a lot of time and trouble.

The animals were grazing up-wind as usual, nor were they far off, as was evidenced by the newly-cropped blades of grass and fresh droppings, into which the tracker quietly shoved his bare toe in order to test its warmth.

The deciduous trees were in the process of shedding their leaves, so it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to walk silently, so I made no bones about it, but shuffled through the dead leaves slowly in imitation of the noise which the grazing animals were bound to be making themselves, hoping thereby that my movements would be mistaken for one of their own party, which was exactly what occurred.

The men we had overtaken begged hard to accompany us, but I steeled my heart, telling them, however, that they might come up when they heard me shoot, but on no account before. They told me that the bison were probably heading for a bambu and *malgan* covered range about two miles further on, on the slopes or crest of which they would pass the hot hours of the day.

However, it was yet early, and, as I had made up my mind to spend if necessary the whole day in securing this bull, I determined on no account to run any risks by hurrying especially at that time, when I might come up with them at any moment with little or no warning. So taking two men only, I loafed on very slowly, halting every now and again to listen, and then on again in the same manner. We had proceeded perhaps half a mile in this manner when my ear caught the sound of some animals shuffling about among the leaves some distance ahead, but as we could not make out what the animals were we proceeded again as before when, from the same direction, I heard a bugle-like note of a bison calling, not their call of alarm which is a shrill kind of a whistle. There was now no longer any doubt as to what the animals before us were, so leaving the two men hidden behind a bush to await developments, I went on as before, making no attempt to conceal myself, for the ground here was thickly covered with dead leaves, so that my only chance of getting up to them unnoticed was by acting successfully as if I were one of their own party.

It was not till I had got up to within two hundred yards of them that I first saw the hind quarters of some of the rearmost cows as they slowly grazed away from me. The wind was blowing slightly

from my right front so I edged slightly away to the left of their course, so as not to appear to be following them.

At length the bull also came in sight, a monster too, but he was on the further side of the herd, so it was necessary for me to get a good deal nearer to them. I was now in full view of the whole herd, consisting of eight cows and calves and one bull, who evidently had kept all other bulls at a distance. They, however, paid no attention to me, evidently mistaking me for one of the numerous deer whom they were accustomed to see every day of their lives, for I kept at first well to one side of them moving at the same pace and in the same manner as themselves, mooning aimlessly along, stopping every now and then, apparently to scratch myself up and down against a tree trunk, or else to cull a leaf here or a blade of grass there, never once looking in their direction or appearing to take the slightest interest of their presence. Jungle fowl, who at other times when I was stalking by stealth would have skedaddled off cackling with fright and alarming all the jungles for hundreds of yards around, now scarcely took the trouble to get out of my way, and were busily scratching among the leaves for insects, only a few yards off. The strain of the excitement, however, was great, and the perspiration streamed down my face as I zigzagged, nearer and nearer, to the browsing animals to whom by this time I had apparently become familiar; but the pace was slow, very slow, and I think it was the strain of this more than anything else that I was feeling.

At last I was within seventy yards of the old bull; but this was the nearest I could get to him, for a cow stood between me and him scarcely twenty yards away. So I took the advantage in passing a bush, to bring my 12-gauge rifle to shoulder and, taking a quick aim at his shoulder, I fired, giving him the contents of the second barrel as he dashed forward.

I lost sight of him for a few moments, but saw him again about four hundred yards ahead, as he rushed across a bit of open ground, but that glimpse was a hopeful one for it showed him heeling all over to one side like a yacht in strong wind. Rushing up to the place where I had last seen him, I listened, and heard groans coming from under some bambu clumps further on. Approaching these quickly, but carefully, I was just in time to see the huge brute

expire, lying on his side with his back against one of the clumps. My word, what a monster he was, almost quite black, measuring at the shoulder 78 inches—6 feet 6 inches—the details of which I have in an old note-book. But I was greatly disappointed with the horns, for though they were very massive, being 20 inches in girth, they were scarcely 27 inches in length, being much splintered and frayed, and quite useless as a trophy. I don't think I ever saw horns so knocked about as these had been, and at least six inches had been broken away from them. I have not the diary of this year, but fortunately have an old note-book which contains some notes regarding the trophies shot on this trip. But he was a very big-bodied bull, one of the largest I ever shot. My first shot behind the shoulder had penetrated his lungs, but it was the second shot that had killed, for it had broken up his liver. I did not note this much at the time ; it was not till some years later, in Mysore, that I realised the full value of the "liver-shot".

On hearing my shots all four men turned up, so I sent one of them to camp to fetch more men, and left the other to watch the carcase, while I and the other two trackers went to look up another spot about three miles off, where they said they had located another good bull.

The sun was now getting strong, so that the bison would be found near their midday retreats which would probably be on the slopes or crest of one of the ranges smothered in bambus and *malgan* creepers. Having a little local knowledge, we were able to anticipate where this would be in regard to the particular herd we were after, and thus saved ourselves a lot of time and trouble by cutting in on to their track leading to their retreat.

On arriving at the range in question, we found the track wound upwards along the side of the hill ; the ground under the *malgan* was bare of leaves, so we had to proceed with great caution, for we might at any moment stumble on to the animals, for here there was nothing to warn us of their presence, as in the case with the first herd.

At one spot, where there was some grass, we found they had been lying down quite recently and their "forms" and footmarks showed that there were five cows and one fairly good bull, not nearly so large as the last one, but good enough.

The scent here was very hot, for we could actually smell the animals, the place where they had been lying smelling strongly like a cow-shed. Their footmarks leading away from this spot showed that they had wandered on quietly, and were not frightened; thus reassured, we pushed on again very carefully.

As we neared the top of the hill, on which was a plateau, one of the trackers suddenly caught me by the arm and silently pointed ahead, and I was just in time to see the hind quarters of a cow disappearing among the bambus over the top. So at last we had come up to them. Leaving the men behind, I pushed on alone, keeping well under the shelter of the crest for a time, and then cautiously peered over the top.

There they all were, on the level, right out in the open, without a scrap of cover, except a few trees under which some of them were lying down, so it looked as if this was going to be their retreat for the day. The bull was standing about 180 yards away, which was too far for certainty.

I was in a bit of a dilemma, for I didn't know exactly what to do, for they were now in a quiescent state; had they been on the move I would have acted as before, but under the present circumstances I was afraid to show myself, so I awaited developments, trusting to luck to bring the bull within range.

After watching them for about half an hour, I saw the bull go and lie down under a bambu clump on the very brink of the hill where it jutted out into space, with a perpendicular fall below him. I afterwards found that this was an old "form" of the bull, and I could not help admiring his choice, for on one side he was completely protected from any attack by the sheerness of the fall below him, while behind, he was completely concealed and sheltered by the bambu clump. From this spot he had a grand view of the country for miles away below him, and also got the full advantage of any breeze, which helped to drive away the gnats and flies that worried him. Altogether, it was an ideal choice and so much the worse for me.

It was now evident that he had settled himself for the day, so it was of no use for me to wait any longer, and I had to do the best I could. So creeping along under the shelter of the crest to within about fifty yards of the spot where the bull had lain down, I

attempted to climb up the perpendicular bank above me, hanging on to tufts of grass and bushes ; but as the bank was overhanging in one part, it was not long before I lost my footing and went rolling with much clattering of loose earth and stones, down to the bottom again. Immediately an old cow poked her head over the edge, and seeing me struggling to my feet, at once gave her shrill cry of alarm and away scampered the whole herd, whom I never saw again.

I knew it was no use going after them, for bison, when once frightened, will generally run for miles before they stop again, and even then will be on the look out. So there was nothing for it but to proceed to the spot where the third good bull was said to have been located, which I had purposely left to the last, as he was nearest to my camp at Golar Jhira.

It was three o'clock before we took up his tracks having, in all probability, a long way yet to go before we could come up with the animals, for by the time we reached their midday halting place they would have already left it and moved on.

It took us nearly two hours of steady tracking before we reached this spot, only to find that they had left it about half an hour previous to our arrival.

We had only about an hour and half of daylight left, so it behoved us to be prompt in whatever we did, though to unduly hurry matters would be certain to spoil sport. However, luck was creeping our way without our knowing it. We had scarcely proceeded half a mile from this spot, when suddenly the shrill alarm-calls of bison broke out ahead of us ; they had been alarmed by something in front of them, probably by some feline, and came tearing through the forest in our direction. I just had time to press the men down under the cover of a bush, when the herd came thundering by within forty yards of us. The bull was some way behind, but was travelling at an astonishing pace, evidently trying to make up for lost time. I aimed well ahead of him when I fired and to my great delight he turned a complete somersault and lay still with his head in the direction from which he had come ; his neck having been broken by my bullet. The resounding *thud* with which his huge body came down, regularly shook the ground around and sent up a cloud of dust. It was all over in a twinkling, but brief as it was, it

was a grand sight. He was not so big in the body as the first bull, but his horns were perfect, measuring 33 inches in length with a girth of 18 inches and beautifully symmetrical.

Cutting off his head with some difficulty, we slung it on a pole, which the two men carried between them, and started off for camp, first hanging up some paper over the remains, which would be cut up and brought in next morning.

Altogether, I was very well pleased with my first day's sport. We saw several more herds of bison on our way to camp, but I was satisfied and did not go after them.

It was dark by the time we reached our encampment at Gular Jhira. It was a lonely spot right in the heart of the jungles, far from all human habitations, lit up for a radius of about sixty yards by the flickering light of the camp fires, round which sat groups of half-naked jungle men, among whom there was a buzz of excitement when we walked into camp, as they eagerly enquired as to what luck we had had.

A few pots of water poured over me, a change into comfortable night clothes, and I settled down to a substantial dinner which my cook served up to me on a box, which did duty for a table, for I had come out with the intention of "picnicing," and had not even brought a tent, for the weather was perfectly fine and warm.

I found a most delightful little bower constructed for me by the Gonds, made of interlaced branches of trees and grass, within which, on top of a thick layer of grass and leaves, my bedding had been spread.

Dinner being finished, I adjourned to my little retreat with my pipe and lay there comfortably smoking at peace with all men.

The round entrance to my little arbour, vignetted from within a pretty little picture outside. Within the fire-lit circle, the men sat about busily cooking and eating their food, for they had plenty of meat that day, and in consequence were in the best of humours; rude chaff flew from one to the other as they discussed the prospects of the next day's sport, some saying that the Sahib would pull the bisons' tails before he shot them, for the trackers were telling them of the manner in which I had walked up to the first herd that day, which to them was apparently a novel method of stalking. One of



the trackers of the second batch of the three whom I had sent out had been brought in, and reported that his companions were watching a large solitary bull, who was very savage, for he had charged one of the men who were following him. Thus the talk of the men ran on, now discussing some weighty point, now chaffing or playing some practical joke on each other, all in high spirits and as jolly as sand-boys. Beyond them loomed the dark and silent forest, above which twinkled a star-spangled sky.

I was just comfortably tired and suddenly was in the realms of sleep.

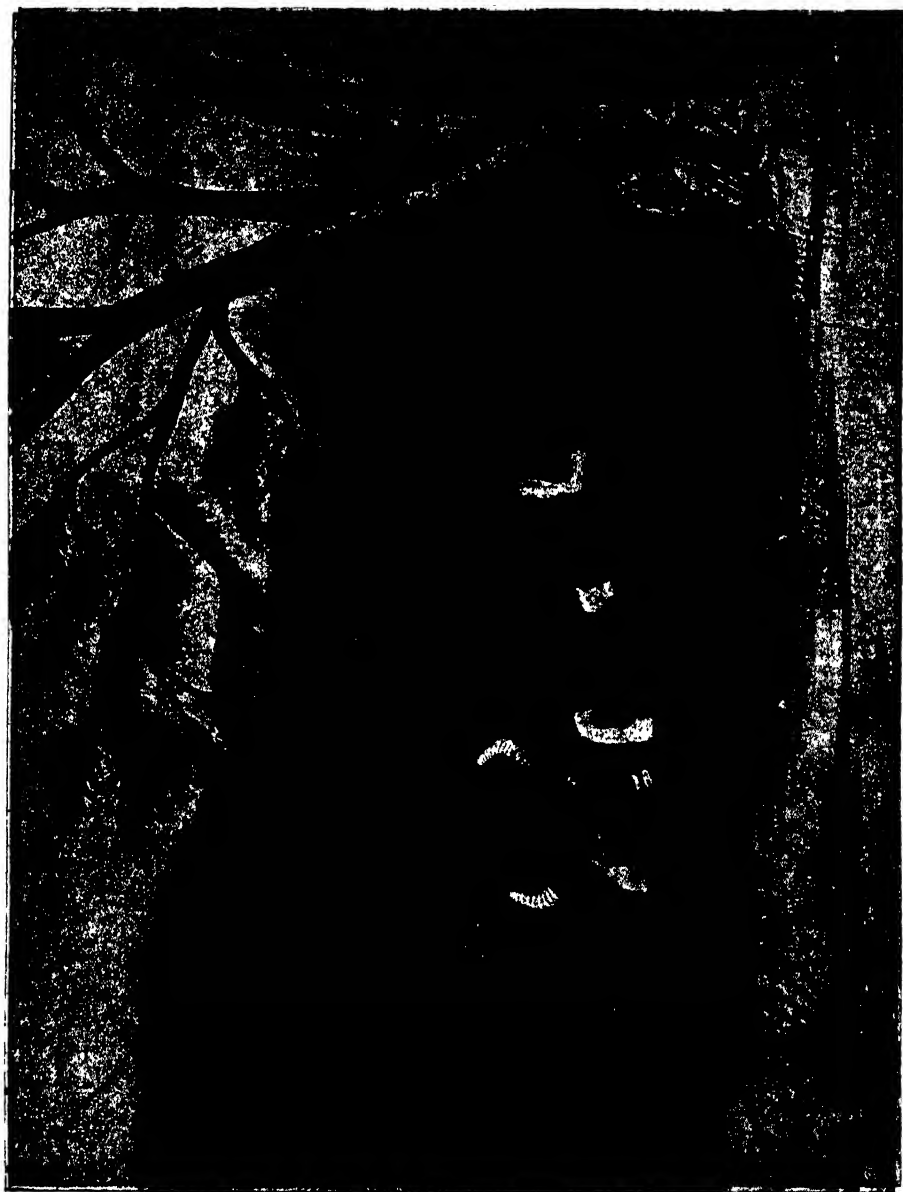
We were up and off again before daybreak, having about five miles to go.

I was rather sceptical about the charging proclivities of this bull ; but I had reason to change my opinion before the day was over.

The sun was well up before we overtook the trackers on the trail of this bull. They were, however, close up with him and pointing down into a small valley, they whispered that he had just entered it. So I pushed on very carefully and at length caught sight of him standing in a solitary sulk about a hundred yards from the banks of a dry river-bed, which swerved abruptly round the shoulder of a hill ; at the same time the bull moved forward, heading apparently for an animal track which led down into the bed of the river near the point where it turned round the hill. I immediately took in the situation : if I could only get into the river-bed without being seen, I would probably be able to get a splendid shot. Taking advantage of the bull passing out of sight temporarily behind a bush, I dashed across the intervening space to the bank of the river and slid down it out of sight ; then legged it along under its shelter as fast I could in order to intercept the course of the bison. I had reached within thirty yards of the animal track when the bison suddenly turned down it, round the corner of the bank above. He did not see me but, as he was said to charge people at sight, I did not wait for him to do so, but fired into his shoulder as he passed giving him the second barrel as he rushed on, to help him along.

Re-loading at once, I went on quickly and found plenty of blood, but no bison. Taking up the trail, I and the trackers pushed on ; but that brute led us a tremendously long dance, and for seven whole





A CHARGING BISON.





hours we were after him, frequently coming up with him, but always just too late for a shot. We saw numbers of other bison on the way, but we were on "blood", and he was a splendid bull, so it was he or none at all. It was about 3 P.M., when we were following his tracks down the slopes of a hillside, the tracker to my right suddenly gave a cry of warning and bolted. Looking round I saw, to my astonishment, the bull scarcely twenty yards from me, a magnificent sight, with his head held high and one forefoot raised in the act of pawing the ground savagely ; before I recovered from my surprise, the huge beast suddenly lowered his head and thundered down towards me, which brought me effectually to my senses, for dodging to one side I fired from my hip as he passed me, blowing his heart to pieces, but his impetus carried him on down hill at a tremendous pace with much crashing and smashing through trees, until he finally brought up against a bambu clump.

After this, I was not quite so sceptical about bison charging. In fact I have known them to do so on several occasions, though I admit that these are exceptions and not the rule.

This bison measured 6 feet 1 inch at the shoulder, and was deeply marked on the back by the claws of a tiger, who had apparently sprung on him when he was lying down, mistaking him for a cow or a young one, but found him too much for him. He was much like the first bull but not so powerfully built, which probably accounted for his having been driven into leading a solitary life, the younger bulls having been too much for him in his old age. His horns also were much frayed and splintered.

It was too late to do much more that day, so we returned to camp, having a long way to go, bagging, on my way back, a fine stag Samber and a Bherki, and also a pea-chick for the pot.

The next day I secured two splendid bulls, walking up to them through the leaves without any difficulty, as in the case of the first bison. But as I am afraid of wearying the reader, I will not go into the details of the manner in which these two last bulls were secured.

These five bulls were the pick of those jungles, for their tracks had been particularly searched for and taken up by trackers sent out a week before and especially for that purpose.

Of these five, one had been secured by stealth, one by luck, and three by the "confidence method". I could also have shot a good number of other bison, but, as I said before, I only wanted the very best and I got them.

On my return to Delakhari, an incident took place which serves to illustrate the tendency which up-country natives have sometimes of "seeing red" under very little provocation.

I had occasion to fine two sawyers for persistently neglecting their work in spite of repeated warnings. I thought no more of the matter, until one of my men came to me one evening and said that he wished to warn me that the two brothers, whom I had fined, had conspired to attack me together on the following morning when I went on my rounds.

Being forewarned was to be forearmed, and as boxing and wrestling (West-country) were my particular hobbies, I rather looked forward to the encounter than otherwise. Next morning, I went as usual down the line of sawyers, but kept a sharp watch out of the corner of my eye as I passed by these two brothers, and it was fortunate that I did so, for no sooner had I passed, when one of them raised an axe and came at me from behind. I spun round sharply and drove home a "counter" with all my force, and the next moment the man was on his back, senseless. The second man, who fortunately for me was unarmed, grappled me under the arms from behind, which laid him fatally open to a "cross-buttock" fling which I at once gave him and sent him flying heavily on to his head on the ground, where he lay groaning. The whole thing was over in less than three seconds, forming a decided object lesson to several hundred on-lookers that were around, many of whom probably knew of the impending attack on me and saw the prompt way in which it was met. I then had the hands and feet of the two men bound, and some pots of water thrown over them; when they had completely come to their senses, I asked them which they preferred—to be prosecuted in a court of law for murderous assault, or take a thrashing there and then. They said, the latter.

So I had them each tied to a tree, and my orderly, a big hefty Pathan, laid on with great gusto, twenty stripes each. Rather high-handed and drastic measures, some will say; but it must be remem-

bered that I was the only European in those hundreds of miles of jungles, responsible for the work and good conduct of some 500 men, some of whom, among the sawyers, were recruited from among the worst types ; nor was it then so very long after the Mutiny, and it was not improbable that among so large a number of men of this character, there were some among them who had taken part in the near past in some of the indignities that had been inflicted, at that time, on unarmed Europeans.

Any show of weakness on my part, therefore, would have been fatal, and drastic measures were the only means of keeping such a crew in order. I had no more trouble after that.

I permitted these two men to return to their task, and they worked splendidly, so much so that a few months afterwards I promoted, for his good work, the man who had attacked me with an axe ; I believe that man would have done anything for me after that.

I sent my trophies in to my head-quarters at Hoshungabad, and the news of my success soon became bruited about, with the result that I received a letter from a certain sportsman A., asking me if I would kindly put him and a friend of his in the way of getting a little bison shooting, saying that he had heard of my late success. The letter was followed next day by the gentleman in person, bringing with him his friend, B. of Kamptee.

They asked me my method of procedure, and I told them—early rising, much hard work and stalking with great patience. None of these seemed to suit A. who affected to look upon my proposals as mistakes of youthful ardour. No, he would beat, his shakari had told him that was the best way, so he would *beat* for the bison.

Now bison, worse even than Sambar, are the most perverse beasts in the world to drive to any given point, and will break through the stops or back over the beaters, anywhere, but in the direction of the gun. I have only once known bison to come out quietly before the gun, and that was during a quiet tiger-beat, when two cows and one bull came and stood in front of me for several minutes, when of course I did not fire

B informed me superciliously that he *always* smoked during a beat.



I gave them men to show them the best bison grounds, and otherwise left them at the mercy of their wonderful shikari, whom they implicitly trusted. I did not go myself.

Well, for a whole solid week they stolidly beat and disturbed the jungles for miles around with fiendish yells, always with the cry of "a little further on," and B., I suppose, stolidly smoked his cigars, but never a thing did they get except one Sambar and a few minor deer. It was then my turn to smile!

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CHAUPNA MAN-EATERS.

It was in the days of my griffin-hood in the hot weather season of 1867, that I found myself, in my capacity of Assistant Conservator of Forests, in the neighbourhood of Chaupna in the Hoshungabad District of the Central Provinces.

Both Chaupna on the Moran river and Bagra on the Tawa river some forty miles away, had been for many years, and I believe are still, subject to periodical outbreaks of man-killing, which I can only account for by the fact that at both Chaupna and Bagra there are the remains of numerous deserted silver-mines, which were habitually resorted to by tigresses when about to have cubs. In the neighbourhood of these mines the stock of wild game was very scanty, so that such tigresses were obliged to resort to temporary man-killing in order to support themselves and their cubs, until the latter were old enough to be moved to a better locality.

At the time of which I am speaking there were at Chaupna four man-eaters, one of whom only—the tigress—was the man-killer; the other three being her mate, a huge old male tiger, and two full-grown cubs, a male and a female, the progeny of the old male and the man-killing tigress.

At that period all these four tigers used to go about together, and though the old tigress alone always performed the actual killing of human beings, all four undoubtedly partook in these repasts on human flesh, so that the other three were virtually potential man-killers of some future date.

On arrival at Chaupna, I found that the village was entirely deserted on account of these man-eaters. Only the walls of the houses were standing, and the surrounding fields had run to jungle. Not a single human being was in sight, every man, woman and child having fled in terror from this portion of the country.

I pitched my camp at a very picturesque spot under a large *peepal* tree on the banks of the Moran river which ran between the hills

at this point. Here, on the morning following my arrival, I was waited on by a deputation sent by the inhabitants of the neighbouring village of Cherapatla, headed by a gray-headed aboriginal patriarch, an old Gond whose entire dress-suit consisted of a piece of rag some eight inches by four inches, and a sharp little crescent-shaped axe. His nose was flat, and his body coal-black and very, very thin ; nevertheless his movements and carriage were very lithe for such an old man.

This old fellow flung himself at my feet and commenced an out-pouring of thanks to his various deities for having at last sent him an avenger to punish the *shaitans* (devils) who had killed and eaten his three sons, and completely destroyed all the hopes of his house in his old age, to say nothing of the various relatives and friends who had been disposed of in the same manner. He took it for granted that Providence had sent me there specially for this purpose, and never for a moment questioned my intentions regarding this all-absorbing subject.

Seeing their obvious anxiety, my hopes rose, for it now looked as if I might obtain men to act as beaters, which I had not anticipated. But I was mistaken, for nothing would induce them to stay so far from the safety of their own village, and in the midst of such a dreaded jungle. Only their leader, the old Gond, stopped with me, the remainder departing early so as to be back in their village well before nightfall.

But I was not going to be done ; if there was no other way, I made up my mind to hunt the jungles on foot, systematically every day, until I came across these tigers.

I had to take special precautions at camp for the safety of my camp-followers, and always tied out my buffs in person, for fear of the man-killer pouncing out unawares on the men if they went into the jungles without me.

On several occasions my buffs were killed, but being only of ordinary size, they did not go far with four full-grown tigers, who simply finished them at one sitting, so there was never any "drag" for us to follow ; and not having sufficient men to act as beaters, I was unable to organize a beat on the chance of finding them in the neighbourhood of their kills. So there was nothing for it but to

walk the jungles steadily every day until we should come across them, for I was determined to stay until I had had at least one whack in at them. I also sent for some larger buffs.

In the meanwhile, in company with the old Gond, my Sikh orderly and one or two other men, I systematically searched all the most likely covers and pools of water, chiefly in the hottest time of the day. One day, when out in this manner, while proceeding down the dry bed of a river and least expecting to see anything, I came suddenly on one of the tigers lying fast asleep on his back, with his legs cocked up in the air, in the manner dogs sometimes lie in the hot-weather. Of course I had not got my rifle; and before I could get hold of it, the tiger jumped up and vanished.

When a larger buffalo arrived, I tied it out myself in a place which I had previously marked with an eye to sitting up over the remains if it was killed.

Next morning we found the beast had been killed, and that a sufficient amount of it was left to, perhaps, induce the tigers to return to it again in the evening. The remains, however, had been dragged for over a mile and a half, nearly to the crest of a high hill, where we found them deposited under a big rock.

Fearing that the tigers might get suspicious if the kill was moved, I determined to sit on top of the rock, with a few branches as a screen in front of me and the hillside behind. It was an extremely risky thing to do considering the character of the animals I had to deal with; but I was in hopes they might turn up before darkness set in, for there was no moon at all that night, while there were also clouds about, for the *chota-barsat* or preliminary rains were threatening to break.

At about 4 o'clock in the evening I took up my post on the rock, and sent my men to await me at a previously selected place some eight hundred yards down the valley, where they would be protected on two sides by perpendicular cliffs. Their front was to be guarded by a large fire—in fact they would be in a regular cleft in the cliff with the only approach guarded by the fire. It was fortunate that it was so; for while only one tiger came to where I was seated, the remaining three man-eaters spent their time for hours in persistently shikaring my unfortunate men. But I am anticipating.

As soon as I was seated and left to myself, I began to consider my position. The hillside behind me sloped down to my perch rather steeply, so I did not think it likely that the tigers would come down from that direction ; it was also thickly strewn with a layer of dead leaves, so if they did come that way I would have plenty of warning. Below the rock on which I was seated was a small water-course coming down diagonally from my left rear, passing below and then on to my right front in the direction where my men had gone. Being seated near the crest of the hill at a height of about 2,000 feet, I had a magnificent view away below me of mile upon mile of rolling forest, hill and dale, emerging gradually into a blue and far-distant range on the horizon.

I thought it most likely that the tigers would first appear down the water-course from my left, but it is very difficult on such occasions to judge correctly as to what the beasts might or might not do, for they seem to make it a point of honour always to falsify all previous calculations, as happened on this occasion also.

Hour after hour passed in silence. Nothing appeared except a herd of four sambar, three does and one grand old stag. The sun went down behind the great hill at my back, extinguishing the brightness of my foreground and deepening all the shadows. The clouds also banked up more heavily overhead, and in the fast gathering gloom objects commenced to lose their form and to assume fantastic shapes, helped no doubt by the tricks which imagination is apt to play at such times.

At last it got so pitch dark that I could no longer see my hand before my face ; but I hung on, for by this time there were vivid flashes of sheet-lightning at intervals, so that I was in hopes that one or more of these flashes might show me one of the tigers and enable me to get a shot, though I must say I was beginning to feel deuced uncomfortable.

The deathly stillness that preceeds a storm reigned around me, when suddenly my ear caught the sound of a stone having been turned stealthily above and behind me. I listened intently for some moments, but as all was silent, I came to the conclusion that imagination was playing tricks with me again ; so I continued to watch my front carefully during the flashes of lightning.

Suddenly there was another slight sound in my rear, but this time followed immediately by the *slouch ! slouch ! slouch !* as of a man walking through the leaves, *coming straight down to me !* I immediately slued round with my gun to my shoulder pointed up hill, and waited, though what I was going to do I had no idea, for in that direction, as everywhere else, it was pitch black darkness. On came the tiger, for there was no doubt as to what it was, nearer and nearer until at last I saw a couple of glowing eyes as the beast suddenly came to a halt scarcely twenty feet from me. For a moment these eyes, for I could see nothing else, looked down on me, then *woof !* and a bound. Thank God ! the beast had jumped down into the water-course below my rock, apparently in order to investigate matters at his or her leisure before making up its mind to attack me.

I had not dared to fire as long as the beast was on the sloping ground immediately above me, for it would have brought it straight down on to the top of my head. But now it was below me. I watched eagerly for a chance of a shot during the flashes of lightning ; but though I got one fleeting glimpse of a magnificent male tiger, I was not able to fire at him before all was again that hopeless inky blackness which follows a blaze of light.

After this I did not see the beast again, though I could hear him shuffling and snuffing about under me. I was now in a very awkward fix, and it was merely a question of time for the man-killer to arrive and pull me down, for in that dense darkness I would be able to do little or nothing to defend myself. There was only one thing to do, and that was to fire off my gun, and sound my bugle, which was to be the signal for my men to come and fetch me, neither of whom, by-the-bye, had calculated on staying so late.

I therefore fired off my gun, expecting to hear the tiger below me immediately make a bolt ; but he did nothing of the kind, merely lay still, and then commenced to growl. I thought that the beast connected the noise of my gun with the lightning, so I fired again, blew my bugle, shouted and whistled, but still the tiger refused to move.

Hearing my bugle, my men lit their torches and advanced in my direction making as much noise as they could, as I had instructed them to do on such occasions. But in spite of all this, it was not till they were within some twenty yards of my position that I heard

the tiger slip away from under my rock with a growl and make off up the bed of the water-course. I must say I have had many a better half hour than this one! Nor did we feel safe from attack until we were safely back again in camp.

I would never have believed, that any tiger could have behaved so callously and fearlessly as this one had. But the more you knock about the jungles, the more it will be borne in on you that there is no knowing how a feline will conduct itself at night, for they have quite as many diversities of character as our domestic dogs.

This male tiger was apparently very near to being, if he was not actually, a man-killer himself. He had seen, and heard the cries of, many a human victim done to death by his spouse, and was probably under the impression, when he saw me and heard my voice, that I was another prospective victim in a fix, and that it behoved him to keep me in that fix, until his spouse should arrive on the scene and perform the final fixing in the scientific manner of an expert, in fact he was merely guarding me, as a savage dog would a bone.

In the meanwhile, as I learnt later, the man-killing tigress with the other two tigers, had been wasting their ingenuity in stalking my men in their cleft in the cliff; but as they maintained a huge bonfire at the entrance, and made free use of their voices and the large stones that lay about, the tigers could do nothing but crawl about below and above them. It was very fortunate that the tigers were thus otherwise engaged, for had the whole party of four visited me, while I was in that helpless position, I would not have known in which direction to maintain my guard, so that while I was guarding one approach, the old lady could easily have boned me at a rush from the other, before I could turn round to use my rifle. We had undoubtedly got ourselves into a very tight place. However, all's well that ends well, even a fiasco, when it ends well for ourselves.

I had now seen the male tiger twice: on the first occasion he had escaped me, and on the second occasion I had escaped him! so honours were divided so far. But I determined to stick to my task, so kept at it doggedly.

Our commissariat, however, was running out, for I had refrained from shooting at game, in order not to disturb the tigers should they happen to be in the neighbourhood. But I was at last obliged to

procure something for our larder ; and, as there were hundreds of silver-hackled jungle-fowl all round our camp, I loaded my gun with number six shot and set out with three men in case larger game should be found.

I had scarcely gone four hundred yards from camp when, just as I turned the bend in a *nalla*, I came suddenly on my old friend the male tiger standing with his tail-end towards me but looking back over his shoulder in my direction. The next moment he gave a single easy and graceful bound, and landed on top of the perpendicular bank some twelve feet in height under which he had been standing a moment before. From this point of vantage he stood still and gazed quietly down on me in a solemn and unconcerned manner. As I was then engaged in looking for jungle-fowl only, I had in my hand a muzzle-loader charged with only number six shot. The huge solemn looking beast was scarcely ten yards from me, and for a moment I weighed my chance of being able to blind him and then dive in under the shelter of the bank, but as he stood immediately above the latter, he would be apt to fall right on top of me, with a possibility of being able to see with at least one eye, when the consequences might not have been quite pleasant for me.

All this took place in about a couple of seconds ; and by the time I put one hand behind me and beckoned to the man in my rear to give me my rifle, keeping my eyes fixed in the meanwhile on the beast in front of me, the tiger turned and commenced to walk slowly off, and by the time I brought my rifle to my shoulder, he had passed behind a clump of bambus. I nevertheless fired through the clump at him.

Had the bullet been a solid spherical ball, it would certainly have crashed through the bambus, and probably killed the tiger beyond ; but like a fool I had loaded the rifle with a *conical* bullet, which merely glanced off one of the bambus, and went heaven knows where, certainly not into the tiger, who bounded off with a *woof* and vanished.

On turning round to see who had given me the rifle, I found that all my men had bolted, except the gray-headed old Gond, the sorrowing and revengeful old father, who alone had stood by me at this critical moment and handed me the rifle which he had throughout



insisted on carrying himself, probably with a suspicion that some such thing as this might happen. This was now the third time that this old male tiger had escaped me. I hunted about for the remainder of the day for his companions but, though I found their footmarks close by, I did not come up with them.

This persistent run of bad luck was very disheartening, while the heat of the weather also became steadily worse and worse, for the rain that had threatened had cleared off. But the more our difficulties mounted up, the more dogged we became.

The rain holding off served our purpose to the extent of circumscribing the movements of the tigers to the neighbourhood of the only few pools of water that were left in the river-beds, though it was terrible work for us in such terrific heat.

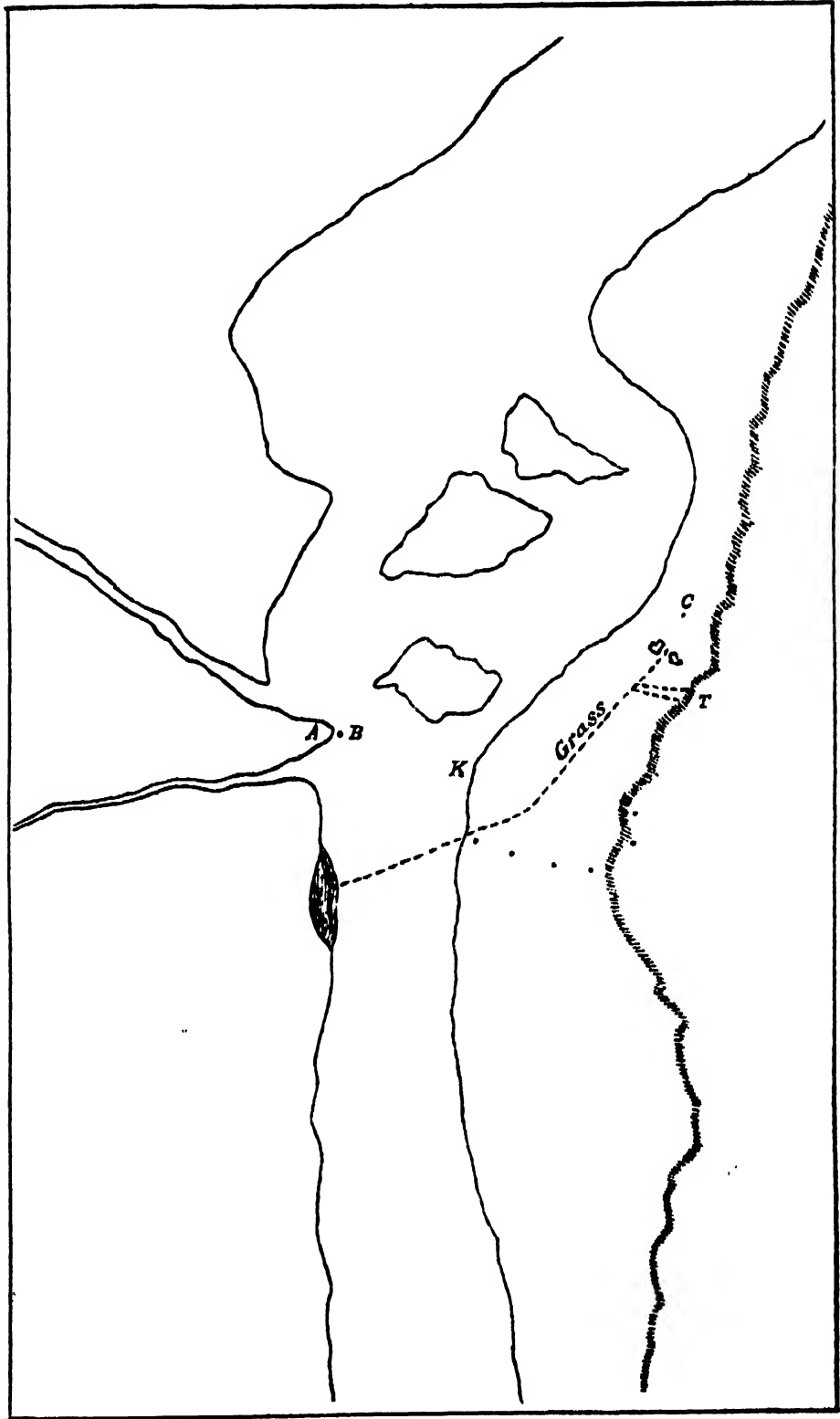
A few days after the last encounter with the tiger, while tracking as usual with some four or five of my men, I suddenly came across the remains of a freshly killed *langoor* monkey near a pool of water (L) near which were the fresh tracks of all the four tigers, who had apparently only just left it.

While engaged in examining and comparing these footmarks, our attention was attracted by the sudden chatter and chirrups of alarm of a couple of magpies and a squirrel, in a strip of grass and bushes some hundred yards wide, on the false bank of the river that ran under a small cliff along the river-bank.

There was no time to be lost, so giving some hurried instructions to the few men with me, to the effect that they were to beat up the patch of grass towards me, one man going along the top of the cliff, I legged it up the bed of the river and stood (at C) in the middle of the grass, beyond the place where the tigers appeared to be.

I had been there scarcely five minutes, when the head and shoulders of my old friend the male tiger suddenly appeared between two rocks about twenty yards in front of me. There was no taking me unawares this time !

He spotted me the moment he rounded the rock, and seemed to recognise both me and my intent, for he immediately dropped flat on to the ground behind some drift-wood, and flattened his ears and bared his teeth as he spat at me, presenting only his amiable countenance for me to fire at.



CHAUPNA



Had I been using my rifle, the bullet might have gone over his head at this distance, in which case I would have certainly been knocked down by his rush. But fortunately I was using my smooth bore with solid spherical bullets, and aiming an inch or so below his nose from a slightly higher position, I caught him on the ridge of his nose, smashing his head and brains to a pulp. The huge beast reared spasmodically on to his hind legs presenting his snow-white stomach to view for a moment like a white sheet held up in the air, and then fell over on his back stone dead.

Hearing the shot in front of them, the remaining three tigers dashed up the cliff about sixty yards to my left, giving me only a fleeting glimpse of their tawny hides now and again, at one of which I took a snap-shot but failed to hit.

However we had drawn blood at last, and on the very beast with whom I had more than one personal matter to settle. His teeth showed him to be a very old tiger, so I was probably right in concluding, from his behaviour on several occasions, that he was on the point of becoming a man-killer himself, if he was not one already.

This occurred at about 10 o'clock in the morning so that the excessive heat of the day was yet to come. I knew this to be the only pool of water for several miles in that part of the country, so I concluded that they were not likely to travel far in the burning heat of the day. I therefore determined to sit up at the same place in the evening over a live bait in the hope that the tigers would come back.

I selected, as my post, a jutting spur of rock (A) near the pool of water, some nine feet in height, and made a screen on it at the apex, and fixed a peg (B) firmly into the river-bed below it. I then returned to camp and sent more men to bring in the dead tiger.

On arriving at camp I found to my disgust a telegram ordering me to meet the Chief Engineer of the G. I. P. Railway, then under construction, at Harda at 12 A.M. on the following day. The nearest point of the Grand Trunk Road from Chaupna was at Seoni, thirty miles from Harda, Seoni being about twenty miles from Chaupna, making a total of some fifty miles, which had to be accomplished between daybreak and 12 A.M. on the following day, for I was determined to spend the night in having a last try after the man-eaters.

I therefore had an early dinner and immediately started off the whole of my camp with orders to travel all night without stopping and to post horses for me along the road.

I then proceeded to the scene of my morning's adventure, taking with me a buff, my horse and a few of my men, including the old Gond who had stuck to me throughout.

I took up my post at about 4 o'clock, and sent my men off to await me at a previously selected and prepared place as usual. The clouds were again banking up heavily, with ominous growls of thunder in the distance, so that I had little doubt but that we were at last going to have the long threatened downpour, which would render it useless to sit up longer than nightfall.

The sun was just about to set, when an old stag sambar suddenly gave his air-shaking dank from the top of the cliff in front of me and soon afterwards I had the great satisfaction of seeing all three tigers coming straight down towards the water.

Before reaching it, however, the tigers caught sight of the buff tied below me, and immediately came to a halt. What followed was extremely interesting and instructive.

For a moment all three paused and gazed steadily in the direction of the bait. Then suddenly, as if by mutual consent, the old man-killer, for I have no doubt from the first that it was she, sat down on her hunkers like a large dog and kept motionless guard, while the remaining two animals, both full-grown tigers, immediately broke away, one to the right and one to the left. The reader should now refer to the accompanying illustration.

The tiger on the island crouched along the bank in the grass until he came to some bambu drift-wood, a spray of which caught him in the chest and snapped off, upon which he immediately drew softly back in order not to repeat the noise, then recommenced his crawl, this time round the obstacle.

In the meanwhile, the second tiger crept carefully along in a small depression in the sand; and when the latter finally failed altogether to afford any cover, boldly advanced to the attack at a quick crouching trot, but, before making its final spring, halted and lay flat on the ground switching its tail. It was from this position that the beast apparently caught sight of me, for it suddenly drew back with a snarl.





1. LUNAR LUNAR





I was withholding my fire in order to get a clear shot at that arch culprit who was squatting on guard in the rear. But now that I was discovered, all hope of doing so was gone unless I acted promptly and fired at her where she was seated, a longish shot for the smooth-bore of about seventy yards.

However, I took the chance and aiming high over the head of the nearer tiger, I fired at the man-killer beyond, and then emptied my second barrel into the nearer tiger, as it was in the act of spinning round to bolt, sending it spreadeagle and roaring with its back broken. In a twinkling, a tawny mass shot out of the grass from the spot into which I had fired my first shot heading straight for my position. The whole air seemed to be shaking with the combined roars of the two wounded tigers. Both barrels of the gun in my hand were empty and before I could realize what was happening, the wounded tigress had launched herself on to the top of the projection just in front of my screen.

Fortunately I had my spare rifle, a single-barrel Snider lately sent out to me by my brother, ready loaded lying at my feet, and it was the work of a moment to snatch it up, push it against her side and fire; upon which she toppled over the projection on the further side to that up which she had come, shot through the heart.

I then loaded my weapons, and settled the remaining tiger which had hitherto been crawling about with its back broken and making a most appalling shindy.

I then gave the signal on my bugle for my men to come up, and in the meanwhile got down to examine my quarry, for of course the third tiger had made off. I found both beasts were females, one a very old one, with all her teeth either decayed or entirely wanting. It was with a sigh of thankful relief that I made the latter discovery, for here at last was the pestilential beast who was fast depopulating the country. The single tiger that had escaped was a young male in his prime, who would be well able to earn his own living honestly when once removed from the corrupting company of his parents.

The first man of my party to reach me was the old Gond who, in spite of his age, had out-distanced all the others as he came tearing along like a mad man, brandishing his little axe and shouting as he

came. I merely pointed my hand in the direction where the remains of the arch fiend lay and, understanding me immediately, the old man rushed up to her and opened her mouth. Pausing for a moment to make quite certain, as he examined her teeth, he suddenly commenced a wild dance shouting : " this is her ! this is the *shaitan* that killed my three children, that destroyed my house," followed by a lot of choice invectives. Suddenly lifting his axe, the old man was about to dart in and hack her to pieces, but I was on the watch for this and was in time to intercept his intention by gently relieving him of his axe. In his wild excitement at the climax of his long-prayed-for revenge, he had apparently forgotten all about my presence until my action in taking away his axe drew his attention to me when the poor old fellow threw himself at my feet with a flood of tears, winding his withered old arms round my legs and body, and pouring out a stream of blessings on me in the name of innumerable jungle gods who had till now served him so ill. Suddenly there was a blinding flash of lightning and a terrific crash over our heads, and the next moment the flood-gates of heaven were opened.

It had already been raining for some time past in the distance on the higher hills ; so, fearing the arrival of a spate which is common at such times in these parts, we hurriedly proceeded to drag the tigers to a safer spot further up the bank, for in the meanwhile the remaining men had also turned up.

I had already sent my horse up on to the higher ground, and we had just succeeded in hauling one of the tigers a certain way up the bank, and were proceeding to drag up the older beast also, when some one gave a warning cry, which was followed by a mighty roar of water, as a vast mass like a wall some six or eight feet high, with a foaming and hissing crest, came rushing down towards us. We had barely time to drop the defunct tigress and dash up the bank to safety, when the roaring mass passed over the spot where we had been standing a moment before. We of course never recovered the remains of the tigress, which must have been carried by the water down to the Nerbudda and there devoured by muggers.

The volume of rain was simply appalling ; it appeared to come down in a solid mass, so that it was with difficulty that we could breathe. In the meanwhile it had become pitch dark.

Any attempt to move under such conditions was of course simply out of the question, so we had to make the best of it where we were, and very poor best it was.

We managed indeed to stumble up to a slightly better place higher up, which had been previously selected by my horse-keeper. Here I spent the whole of that miserable night, seated on my saddle which had been placed for me on the top of a bundle of grass, with an umbrella over my head, and the water rushing over the ground at my feet.

After a few hours we became aware that the remaining tiger had discovered the dead body of its late companion, which was deposited scarcely a hundred yards from the place where we miserable mortals sat huddled together, with my white horse forming an excellent mark of attraction on the landscape. Roar followed roar from the enraged beast, while we weighed our chances of an escape from being attacked by him before morning. At length he located us, and seemed to think that we had got the whole of his family in our pockets and seemed anxious to investigate the matter, for he kept us on the jumps the whole night by spasmodic roars from close quarters and in unexpected directions, showing that he was crawling round and round us. Thus we had to sit till day light, when also, for the first time since it started, the rain ceased.

In the morning we had another shock. The old Gond was dead ! The excitement and exposure to the rain had killed him ; he was quite cold and stiff, so he must have expired without our knowing it, several hours before daybreak.

However, his mission of revenge had been fulfilled, so he died contented in spite of that awful night.

My own presence being urgently needed elsewhere, I left my men to bury or burn the old man, and to skin the dead tiger ; and started without having had any sleep or rest and with very little to eat, on my long ride of some fifty miles to Harda.

Fortunately I had a few sodden biscuits and a flask of brandy in my pocket, which served as a breakfast.

As I passed along the road to Seoni, I saw numbers of cairns heaped up at intervals along the side of the road. These cairns marked the places where human beings had been killed by tigers in

the past, it being a religious custom for every native traveller that passes by to throw at least one stone on to the heap. Hence these cairns, on much frequented roads, sometimes reach very large dimensions.

I would have been very weary and down-hearted, but for the knowledge that I had been throwing, of late, something heavier than stones, and that in a more appropriate quarter, and that it would be some time before new cairns would have to be created in this neighbourhood. It was "dogged that did it"!

I do not know what they may be like now, but in former days the country round about both the Tawa and Maron rivers held a great number of tigers. I personally shot here, at various times, over fifty tigers within a radius of about thirty miles from a point on the border of the districts of Hoshungabad and Betul. I cannot now remember all these places, but on glancing over the map I can recall having shot one or more tigers at different times in the neighbourhood of the following places on either side of the border line : Bhadurgaon, Lokhurtalia, Chopna, Dekhna, Chikli, Kesla, Kerela, Simkot, Malni, Paundar, Kankri, Jhuli, Batori, Dhaba, Khapa Saran, Paraspani, Benka-Nanda, Kamtha, Bacha, Chicholi, Bijadeo, Nimpani, Jhar-khund, Rampur, Kamta and Bordai. I could extend the line straight on for another 200 miles right on to Chanda, to say nothing of other parts of the provinces, but I refrain.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### GRIFFIN ABROAD.

There are griffins and griffins ; there is the keen fresh youngster, with a natural intuition for the sport, who is keen on acquiring and taking in all information ; there is the blasé youth who has picked up second-hand a few tips, and in consequence thinks he knows all there is to know ; and there are those who think it the " proper thing " to go in for shikar, but in reality take no interest in it and pay no attention to what is going on, and only do what they are told to do.

Let us subdivide these :—

(a) Firstly, he who though not taught, yet has a natural instinct for woodcraft ; that is, one who has a good eye for country and ability to take in at a glance the probable lay of the land under almost any circumstances ; this gift, which is an instinct in a few, may be acquired by experience with more or less difficulty by others, and never acquired at all by some. Secondly, he who has the instinct which enables him to put himself in the place of the animal, to think and reason as the animal would think and reason under all the various circumstances as he sees them before him, he will then know how the animal will act and how he should act accordingly ; this is more than half the battle and is a gift which few, very few, possess as an instinct, and very few acquire correctly by experience.

(b) He who is very keen on sport, but is naturally devoid of the instinct for woodcraft, as defined above ; he will learn all the tips, but in these he becomes stereotyped, and more often than not apply them wrongly, not allowing for circumstances. Except on occasions when circumstances accidentally fit in with his hide-bound methods, he will always be an unsuccessful and an indifferent shikari all his life, though he will himself profess to have a very different opinion on the matter. Such a man will usually trust secretly more to his subordinates than to his own intelligence, though he would indignantly deny it. I know several old shikaries of this type,

whose words of wisdom are listened to with reverential awe by a public who are taking him at his own value; but go out with him in a jungle and see the howling mistakes he makes every time he interferes in the arrangements.

(c) There are also the would-be sportsmen, who, though they in reality care little or nothing for shikar, go in for it simply because they think it is the "proper thing" to do. These are the most exasperating, for they will pay no attention to what is going on, and almost invariably do just the thing which they should not have done, and so waste every one's time and trouble.

Some years ago when I was stationed at Jubbulpore, some very old friends of mine asked me to take their son out tiger-shooting as he had never shot a tiger, and was anxious to do so. He was a very nice young fellow and universally popular, but I am afraid his thoughts were more with polo, tennis, parties and ladies than with shooting in lonely forests, and I fancy it was somewhat against his will that he came with me at the bidding of his old parents.

It was during April that the request was made, when cholera was raging all over the district, and it was difficult to get coolies as beaters. I see noted in my diary that at the village of Kalpi where I was camped at the time, that "21 people died of cholera—two yesterday." However, I did the best I could, taking with me a *bannia* or merchant to supply ourselves and beaters, while we should remain in the jungles.

On the 15th April I was camped at Sahdah, where I got a kill, and having marked the position of the tiger, I wired to K., who at once joined me.

That night we had another kill, so on the following day we beat for the tigers, but were terribly short-handed, considering the jungle, for we had only 27 beaters.

In this beat the tiger, which I had intended K. to shoot, came to me from K.'s direction in somewhat of a hurry, as if it had seen something there which had scared it. I found out afterwards what this probably was. I realized, however, that the tiger had no intention of going in that direction again, and being frightened it would only force the stops and escape if I tried to turn it, so I knocked it over and killed it.

On my shot a second tiger broke away up the side of the hill in full view of us, where it forced the stops and escaped—the stops, for want of men, being too few in number to turn it.

I was very vexed at the young fellow not having had the shot, so determined to lay myself out to do the best I could for him, for I knew of at least five or six tigers about here.

Next morning another kill was reported about two miles from camp, so off we started.

This time I took a lot of trouble in arranging the beat and stops, for I was determined that K. should have a shot if it could possibly be managed. I put him in a splendid place above an animal track at the foot of the hill, while I myself took up the position of a stop on the side of the hill, from whence I could see him on his *machan* quite distinctly.

When taking a griffin out shooting, always make your arrangements previously for following up a wounded tiger, I did so on this occasion and had borrowed an elephant ; but when it turned up I did not like the looks of the beast which, to me, looked a bit "panicky," from the way it always started and swung round to look in the direction of the slightest noise. This elephant was now coming up with the beaters, where it was not long before she gave the world evidence of her presence, for she apparently came upon the tigers asleep in the bed of the river, on seeing and smelling whom she at once turned tail and bolted, shrieking and trumpeting blue murder, and never stopped apparently for twenty miles, having shaken off her riders on the way, for she was found later in a Government pound 20 miles away.

After a bit of delay caused by this piece of diversion, the beat again advanced, and in a little while I saw two full-grown tigers walking quietly through the grass and bushes below me, going straight towards K. I glanced towards K., expecting to see him sitting perfectly still and on the *qui vive*, but instead, found that he had made himself perfectly at home and was busily swinging backwards and forwards his legs which were encased in black putties. Had he held up a sheet of white paper it could hardly have been more fatal. However, I held my hand, though I had the rearmost tiger within thirty yards of me, to see what the young gentleman would make of



his chance The leading tiger continued to advance without being seen by K. until he was within 30 yards of him, when the tiger suddenly threw up its head and started back, and in an instant whipped round and was off at full gallop towards K.'s left, where he forced the stops and escaped. K. had a forlorn shot at him as he was bolting and wounded him, I believe, in the hind leg, for we found a little blood.

In the meanwhile the second tiger, terrified by the sound of K.'s shot, came bolting towards me like a hare ; my first shot brought it to a halt, and my second barrel finished it. It was a short but very bulky tiger, measuring 8 feet 10 inches. Needless to say K.'s tiger was not to be found.

I was again vexed that I should have been successful, while my guest was still without his tiger ; but I was now convinced that on both occasions he had been at fault in the same way, namely, carelessness in not sitting still and on the look out. People who insist on taking life easy on all and every occasion should not go out tiger-shooting. I gave him a talking to, and on his promising to try and do better, I determined to try and give him another chance.

During the next three days, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, we had no kills so we amused ourselves with smaller fry, and K. shot a fair samber stag with a Snider rifle which belonged to his old dad. This old Snider I vetoed for tiger-shooting and told K. junior that he must on no account use it for a close shot at a tiger, for Sniders invariably carry very high at short distances, sometimes as much as 18 inches above the mark at 15 yards, while Snider ammunition is often very bad or unreliable.

On Tuesday a kill was reported. On examining the kill we found that we had to deal this time with an exceptionally big old male tiger, who would be well worth getting, to do which we probably had our work cut out, for he was probably well experienced as to the meaning of a beat.

We were further terribly handicapped in having very few beaters, for cholera was raging around us, so that success depended on a very careful arrangement of the few men we had at our disposal. However, all went well, and I saw the splendid old tiger walk quietly right up to within about 15 yards of my young friend whose actions





I could see clearly from my tree. I saw K. suddenly raise his fire-arm, and after following the movement of the tiger until he halted, he fired. There was a roar and a rush, and I saw K. snatch up a spare gun, turn round and fire twice in the direction in which the tiger was going.

On going up to him when the beat was over he informed me that in the excitement of the moment he had forgotten my instructions not to use the Snider, and fired with it at the shoulder of the tiger which was only fifteen yards from him, after which he fired twice at it with his smooth-bore as it was bolting, that he was certain that the tiger was hit for he heard it groaning for a long time in the jungles behind him.

However, the jungles were too dense to permit a hope of seeing the tiger other than by committing suicide, while moreover I considered myself responsible for this youngster to his people, so we just sat down and had breakfast and a smoke, while men were sent off to the nearest village to fetch buffaloes. This was a time when a good elephant would have been invaluable, and a bad elephant worse than useless.

However, the village was a long way off, so that it was many hours before the men returned, and then only they brought bullocks and cows with them, for they had been unable to get buffaloes.

We had, of course, from the first, surrounded the position of the tiger with men up trees. They now assured us that the tiger had not left his retreat, which consisted of dense bushes and grass, under and through which ran a ditch, and it was the latter which evidently afforded him, later on, the cover which saved him from our fusillade.

Before having the cattle driven in, K. and I crept round ahead to the only available tree that was there, a peepul tree. I sent K. up first and then handing up the guns to him, scrambled up myself, K. scrambling up higher still so as to obtain a better view.

On being driven in, the cattle at once became uneasy, and some stampeded; but the remainder went on, and soon the tiger began to move and speak. K. from above called out that he thought he could see it, so I crawled up to him and told him to fire at what he thought was the tiger. This he did, and at once we saw the tiger rear itself up on its hind legs and stand thus for an instant with its

forefeet against a sapling, and then fall back. It all happened so suddenly and unexpectedly, that neither of us were able to get in a shot. I have frequently seen tigers in a beat stand up on their hind legs in this manner, exactly in the same way that a cat sometimes does, their object being to obtain for the moment a further view of their surroundings over the tops of the bushes and grass which prevent them seeing more than a few feet around them when standing on all fours ; by thus standing for a moment on their hind legs they raise their height of view from three feet to about nine feet. In the present case the tiger perhaps did it with the object of seeing whom he might devour of the human foes whom he knew were worrying him, and not seeing any of them, he again lay down in the ditch which completely sheltered him and refused to budge.

The cattle now all stampeded and refused to come near the place again. So we were left to our own resources, which were *nil*, for we had no buffaloes, no elephant, and no fireworks.

K. began to talk about going in at him on foot, which was madness, for in that cover we would not have been able to see the end of our guns, much less the tiger, until he was on top of us, when human aid would have been too late for at least one of us, if not both. I had played that game once too often already myself, while moreover I now felt myself responsible for the youngster, who was in my charge, which in itself was sufficient to prevent me doing anything which I might have been foolish enough to try to do had I been by myself.

We then sent a man round with a spare gun to the further side and told him to blaze away into the patch of cover where the tiger was in hopes that the noise would drive him out in our direction ; but it was no use, for the tiger sat tight and never moved an inch, and we would have thought he was dead but for the occasional growls he gave. We then got exasperated and started to fusillade him from our side, but never a move made the tiger.

We then tried another plan. Withdrawing all the men to a distance, we placed them up trees all round and ordered them to remain there silently on the watch, and to inform us at once if at any time they saw the tiger leave the jungle. We then returned to our peepul tree and from thence watched silently for several hours,

hoping that the tiger, finding that all was quiet, would slip out of his cover and so expose himself. At last, however, at nightfall, when it was too dark to see any longer, we were obliged to give it up for the time being and return to camp. We afterwards found that in getting down that tree in the dark we had done a dangerous piece of work, for the tiger had been lying watching us within forty yards of the tree the whole time.

Next morning we returned to the scene with buffs, which we drove in before us. As soon as the buffs smelt the blood of the tiger they began to snort and collect in a body round their leader who then led a bellowing charge right into and through the cover where the tiger had been, but without finding him, for he had left it early in the morning.

There was plenty of old blood, but no new, which showed that his wounds had stopped bleeding, so that we now had nothing to indicate to us the direction in which he had gone, except for a short distance his footprints, when these also ceased, so we were obliged to give up the chase.

We had now had three beats, in which we had turned out five tigers, two of which K. drove back on to me, which were the only ones that were bagged, and two he sent away wounded to turn into man-killers, for within a week, in these same jungles, a wandering villager came unawares on a wounded tiger which at once sprang on and killed him.

After the last exploit, K. intimated to me that his time was up. I understood what he meant, for I was aware that his heart all along had been more elsewhere than in the jungles, so I bade him "good-bye".



A CAMP LOG-TIRE.

## CHAPTER XV.

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### "THE HEN-ROOST 150 FEET HIGH."

It was the custom in years gone by at the end of the rainy seasons, when going into camp, for officials to arrange to meet together : gain for the Christmas holidays for a shoot, or if there were too many for one party, we would split up into two or three parties who would shoot in different parts of the district so as not to interfere with each other. Thus perhaps the Forest Officer, the Civil Surgeon and a few friends would stake out certain portions of the district, while the Deputy Commissioner, the Superintendent of Police and a few friends would make their arrangements in another part, neither party ever dreaming of interfering or poaching on the grounds of the other.

It was in this manner one year in the Jubbulpore District that a doctor and his wife Mr. and Mrs. A., Major B., and the Rev. and Mrs. C., were my guests at our Christmas camping ground at Majgaon, in the Murwara Tehsil.

Thus, with my wife, two daughters, my son and myself, we were a party of five men and five ladies. As the worthy Padri did not shoot, as far as sport was concerned, he must be classed with the ladies, for whose edification in reality this shoot had been chiefly got up, for they were very anxious to see a real living tiger in its wild state and surroundings, on which account a great deal, from a sporting point of view, had to be sacrificed, as will be seen later.

On the occasion I am going to describe, we made a bad start. We had of course to take a considerable amount of crockery and furniture for our Christmas camp, so the camels were fairly heavily laden. On the last camel that was laden, was tied loosely an empty kerosene tin, which apparently had within it some solid loose articles, so that when the string of laden camels started off the wretched tin commenced to swing and bang about, which frightened the camel, who then bolted. This started all the other camels on the jump, and the more they skipped, the more their own loads rattled and the worse they got, with the result that nearly the whole of them stampeded and bolted wildly in all directions across the plain.

Rattle, rattle, bang, bang our precious boxes were being hurled off and scattered all over the country, some of them striking the ground on their corners and exploding like eggs.

Luckily this occurred in the day time, so that after an hour or two all the run-aways were recovered. But it took several days to make good the great amount of damage done ; but luckily we had a few days to spare, so we were able to do this in time.

At length we reached our camp safely on the 23rd of December. The central point of the camp was a large banyan tree, around which again were groves of mango trees, so we had plenty of shade under which to spread out.

The photos herewith given are typical sectional views of such a camp. A camp that has a banyan or a burr tree in it is always delightful, by reason of the large variety of birds they attract on account of their berries. Here the ladies could amuse themselves all day long by practising with air-guns or saloon rifles on green pigeons and other tasty additions for the "pot".

The forest being all around us, firewood of course was unlimited, and we could have a log-fire the size of a house every night if we chose ; however, we usually contented ourselves with a section of a large hollow tree, supplemented with a number of smaller dry tree-trunks, the flames of which mounted perhaps twelve or fifteen feet.

For a Christmas camp I usually had previously collected twenty or thirty cart-loads of dry tree-trunks, some of them of enormous size, which would then be cut into suitable sections.



The great tip for log-fires is to first have a large circular hole dug in the ground, saucer-shaped, about six feet in diameter and some two feet deep, according to the size of the fire you intend having, so as to allow all the ashes from the burning logs above to fall into the hole below, thus giving the fire a good ventilation and preventing it from becoming foul and choked up, as it very soon does if made on the level ground, besides being very much cleaner and nicer in every way.

These log-fires used to be a regular feature in our camp life, and our movements could be traced right round the district by these holes in the ground which we left behind us at each camping ground. These log-fires were usually referred to by us, by the native name of "dhuni," and it was very jolly on a bitterly cold winter's night to draw up our easy-chairs round them, chatting, smoking, or singing songs, accompanied by such musical instruments as happened to have been brought out by individual members of the party, which on this occasion included an Irish bag-pipe, which the Major brought out with him.

Our guests joined us on the 24th on which evening we had a *dhuni* worthy of the occasion, around which carpets were spread and easy-chairs drawn up.

"Ah! Mrs. Hicks," said our dear old doctor, as he turned round and round before the roaring fire rubbing his hands and toasting his sadly reduced frame, which he had sacrificed by his excessive devotion to his duties. "Ah! Mrs. Hicks, this is the kind of camp-fire to have! All I am accustomed to are two sticks trying to keep each other warm."

It was a cold night, so we all agreed with him, while it was also much healthier, fresher and pleasanter to be out in the open like this than to be boxed up inside a stuffy tent.

But even the doctor could not stand by such a fire for long, so when he had warmed himself sufficiently, he retired to his easy-chair which was further away in the shadows, and called to his servant to fetch him his pipe. The servant, however, returned to say that he could not find the pipe in his tent, so he must have it in his pocket. It was not in his pockets, so off the doctor went to look for it in his tent himself.



CAMP-FIRE.



In a few minutes he returned, and not having found it insisted on us all getting up to look for it under our chairs, in case it might have fallen down somewhere. So the whole establishment were busily engaged in looking for the famous pipe, when, the doctor having now come more round into the firelight, some one called out, "I say everyone, just look at the doctor, just look at him!" and we looked, and there, after having turned everything upside down, was the culprit with his pipe all the time in his mouth, without knowing it. He was not allowed to forget that incident in a hurry.

Christmas Day we kept as a day of rest; only that rascal of a son of mine who had just arrived from England, sneaked off with a rifle and bagged a cheetle near camp.

In the evening, however, there were great doings chiefly organized by our native followers, including a native "nautch" or dance, a "native band" of about forty drums, and fireworks and bombs galore. The din they made was something awful and must have been heard for many miles around, especially the exploding rockets and bombs. However, we endured it all with as much patience as possible, which the occasion demanded.

The whole camp of course had been gaily decorated with festooned archways, etc., which at night were lit up with hundreds of "chirags" or little lamps.

Our dinner was bright and festive as we could have wished, having a number of young people among us to liven the whole. The old doctor being my youngest child's favourite, a mock warfare would be carried on between them, during the whole of the meals; raising barricades between them, squabbling over their crackers and sweets, and so on. But the life and soul of our party was Mrs. C., who, though a padri's wife, was constantly up to every kind of innocent mischief, as will be seen later. After dinner, we all adjourned to our grand old fire outside, where we had sing-songs, as well as some old Irish melodies on the bag-pipe, played by the Major.

The programme for the next day was to beat for deer, etc., in the lighter jungles round our camp, which I knew were simply swarming with game of all kinds, except tigers, who were in jungles further off.

We started off in hopes of obtaining good sport; but strange to relate, that though we had beat after beat and there were thousands

of tracks of all kinds of animals, never a single thing did we see. The jungles were absolutely silent and deserted.

We were looking at each other glumly and trying to think what it all could mean, when suddenly the reason, which I should have known had I given a moment's thought to the cause at the time, flashed across me. What fools we had been. Why, what had we been doing at camp on the night previous? What about the bombs, the exploding rockets and the "band" of forty drums. Of course the infernal din we had then made had scared every animal out of the jungles within five miles of us. We all burst out laughing and returned to camp, to pour out our tale of woe to my wife, who now usually left shooting for more active people.

However, we did not get much sympathy, and were told that unless we shot at least some game we would have to starve; which threat promptly led to conspiracy between the three children and that little imp Mrs. C., in which my twelve-bore shot-gun and my wife's prize fowls played a part.

It seems that the fowls in question were up in the banyan tree crawling about in the branches, and my son, who had smuggled out my shot-gun and loaded it, dared Mrs. C. to shoot one of these precious fowls, so that we should not be "starved"; upon which, though she had never fired a big gun in her life, she promptly complied. I appeared on the scene just at the critical moment and was horrified to see the little mite taking aim with a gun which was almost as big as herself. I rushed forward to save, well, to save my gun, when she fired, and terrified by the shock and the explosion, she pitched the gun down on the ground, and clapping her hands to her ears, cried out, "I am not hurt Mr. Hicks, I am not hurt" "Not hurt, indeed; but what about my gun?" said I, as I picked my gun up and tenderly examined it. This had the desired effect. "Your old gun, indeed! it does not matter what happens to me I suppose?" and off walked Mrs. C. with her head held high in the air, and seizing the now dead fowl by the neck, marched off in triumph with it and hung it up in the place where we usually hung our game, remarking--"there! we shan't starve now at any rate." But pride had a fall when the explanation had to be made to my wife, as to how it was that that fowl came to be there.

## CHRISTMAS CAMP DECORATIONS.



LOG-FIRE IN THE CENTRE.

The decorated arch-ways and all the branches of the surrounding trees are studded with little '*chirags*' or earthen-lamps, which when lit at night makes a charming scene.



The next day, the 27th, was the day arranged for our interview with the tigers.

I have omitted to mention that Mrs. A. was, and is, a great sportswoman. I had already introduced her to her first tiger at Bagraji, which she dropped in fine style, but having forgotten to take with her any spare cartridges on that occasion, I was obliged to get down from my tree and climb up her's to give them to her, the wounded tiger all the time lying within about 25 yards.

Major B is the author of that useful little book on shooting and camp life entitled "Sportsman's Vade Mecum" under the modest nom-de-plume of "K. C. A. J."

When he came to Jubbulpore, however, he had not yet shot his first tiger, and applied to me to help him in the matter, which I did, issuing the necessary orders to my men, with the result that he soon bagged two tigers.

We were now, therefore, four men and one lady on the shooters' side, and three ladies and one man (the padri) for an audience.

I should mention also that the doctor too did not really care much about shooting, having come out more for a rest and change, after the hard grind he had had for the past twelve months in the station. To prepare the way for what is coming, I will quote a little incident that took place on another occasion while we were having a beat for small game, which were very plentiful round camp. The guns were posted behind bushes in a line along the ground, and jungle-fowl and pea-fowl were streaming over our heads and a regular fusillade was going on all along the line, except where the doctor, was posted, though more game were going over him than anywhere else.

When the beat was over, we walked over to enquire the reason of his silence and on reaching his "patwa," what did we see, but the doctor flat on his back, with his hat over his eyes, his pipe fallen on to his chest, fast asleep! Some one pushed his hat further over his eyes, when he sat up with "Eh what! what's the matter? when is the beat going to start?"

Well, on the morning of the 27th we had all the beaters collected in anticipation, when the kill was duly reported in the Badora jungles about 2½ miles away. So we were able to make an early start, the ladies on an elephant, and the men folk walking.



The worthy padri insisted on going out in a woollen suit, as it was cold. I warned him that we would have very bad spear-grass to deal with, but he scoffed at the idea, saying that the material of his trousers were too thick for spear-grass to pierce them, and those of us who *knew* grinned a grin and looked the other way, in anticipation of the fun that was to come.

The first part of our way was along the high road, but after about a mile and half, we had to leave the road and then came the spear grass.

We had not gone far, when the padri began to look worried, and to scratch himself surreptitiously. Then came a series of halts, while he picked out what he called "thorns" out of his white woollen socks. Finally, he requested the procession to wait for him, while he disappeared into the jungle. I knew what for ; it was to take off his lower garments and to pick out from them these "thorns" which have a wonderful way of working themselves into such woollen garments. The suppressed merriment that was going on on the top of the elephant was getting so bad, that I was afraid the riders might fall off, and had to threaten to tie them on.

Then came the worst spear-grass and his Reverence was becoming really very distressed, when one of my men brought him relief by solemnly presenting him with the leafy branch of a tree which he begged him to hold in front of him like an apron, as he walked through the grass.

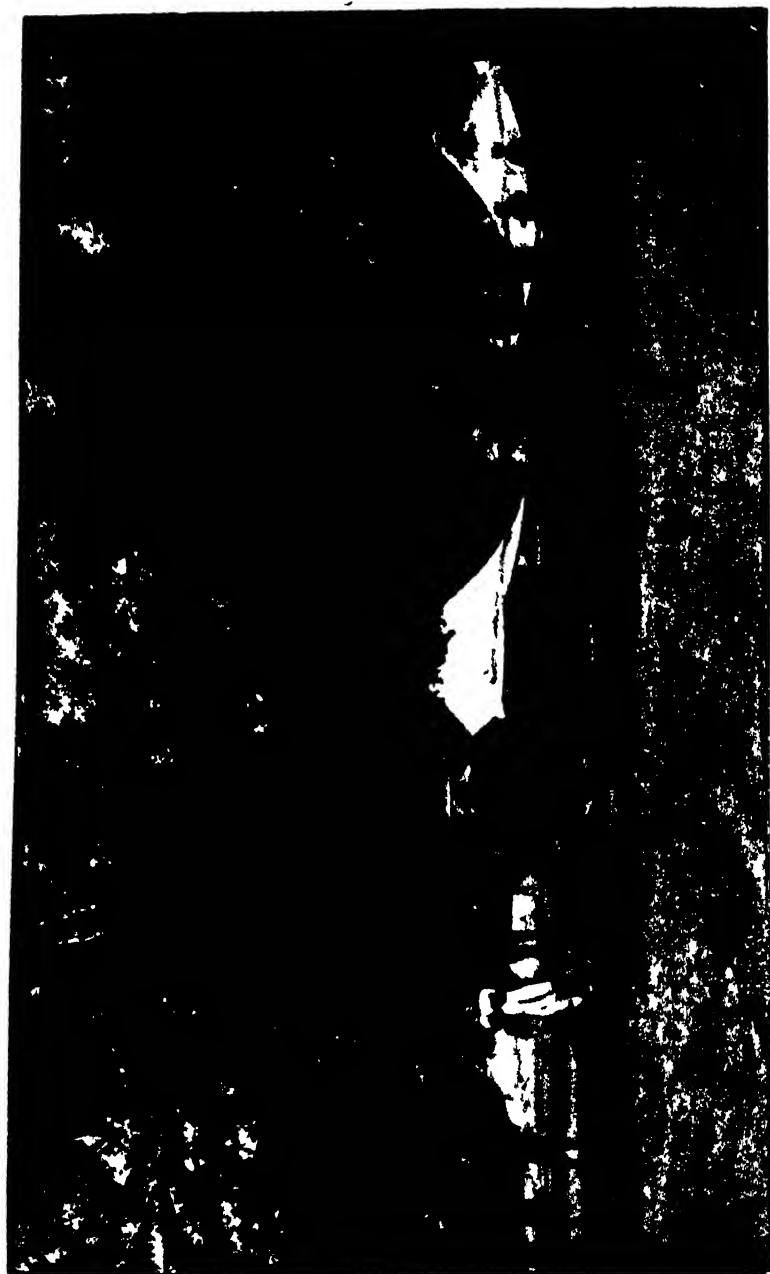
At length we reached the plateau which we had been making for, where I had already had constructed a large platform in a gaunt old Mowha tree, which was for the non-shooting audience, including myself to take care of them ; while the shooters each had a smaller *machan* from which to perform.

I sent up the padri first, who at once settled himself comfortably and took no further interest in anything until the tiger appeared on the scene, being busy all the time in ridding himself of his tormentors, those "thorns" which could not pierce woollen clothes.

When the ladies had seated themselves, it was found that there was no room for me on the platform, so I had to sit on a rung of the ladder which led up to it.

When the other *machans* had been put up, the remaining shooters took up their respective positions—the doctor and his wife to my





Cave Hole Hill





right, not together, but about fifty yards apart ; and my son H. and the Major similarly to my left.

Of course I knew every yard of the ground hereabouts, so having put up the stops we sent the elephant round to fetch the beaters, who were awaiting it.

The chances of all the guns were pretty nearly equal, especially as I knew there were five tigers in the beat, two old ones and three fairly large cubs.

We did not expect any tiger to come up to our " hen-roost, " as we now called it, until after it had been fired at or frightened ; but we nevertheless had a grand view of all that went on in the foreground, for besides being some twenty feet up in the tree, the tree itself was on higher ground.

On asking Mrs. C. at dinner that night, how high she thought our " hen-roost " had been, she brought down the house by opining that " it must have been at least 150 feet high. "

My position personally was a very uncomfortable one, for I was trying to sit on the rung of a ladder which was almost perpendicular, without any cushion to relieve its hardness, so that if I had to shoot, I would probably take a header off the ladder at the same time, perhaps on top of a wounded tiger.

When the beat had advanced about half way, I saw a large tigress move across my front about a hundred yards away and disappear in the direction of Mrs. A. who told us later that she saw it, but was not able to get a shot.

When the tigress next appeared, she was right under the doctor's tree. I could see the doctor's *machan* with the screen round it, but alas ! no doctor was to be seen ; he was apparently having " forty winks " though he denied it. At any rate the tigress walked off under him without being fired at.

However, I had taken the precaution of placing my orderly, Dilliput (the poor fellow died shortly afterwards of cholera dying under the kanarts of my tent) behind the doctor, so he succeeded with some difficulty in turning back the tigress by pelting her with stones which he had taken up for the purpose, for she refused to turn otherwise.

This occurred to my right rear, with the result that the tigress came bolting and roaring straight on to our " hen-roost, " on seeing

which, she immediately halted, drew herself back on her haunches and snarled up at the occupants above ; and then bolted off straight out of the beat at the back of me, without my being able to twist round in time for a shot.

In the meanwhile, the male tiger was advancing towards my son H. ; and here another accident took place, for at the critical moment his *machan* broke and nearly pitched him out. The tiger heard the snap and bolted full speed past the Major, but was going too fast for the latter to get a shot at him.

There now only remained the three cubs, who were apparently dubbing. They were too big to be taken alive, and as after all this bad luck we felt bound to draw tiger blood somehow, when one of the tiger cubs appeared before me I knocked him over.

The beaters said there were two other cubs hiding about near by, but we let them off.

The beaters had now all come up, and we up in the " hen-roost " were just thinking about coming down, when suddenly *waugh! waugh!* from behind us charged the tigress, sending everybody below scattering in every direction in their haste to get up trees. It was the tigress come back to look for her cubs.

Of course none of us were prepared for this, so she got off again, without, I am glad to say, having done anyone any damage, which she might very easily have done.

However, though luck as far as shooting was concerned had not been good to us, we nevertheless had a very jolly time, to which the " good man " undoubtedly contributed a large share.

I was at a dinner party shortly after, given at Jubbulpore in honour of the Chief Commissioner, when some one described the use of the olive branch in resisting the insinuations of certain little " thorns " into woollen garments in the Badora jungles !

The remainder of the Christmas holidays we spent in small game shooting, including cheetle, samber, neilgai, kakhar, jungle-fowl and pea-fowl, being joined during the latter portion of the holidays by the Police Officer.

On the 2nd January the holidays ended, when our guests left us, having had, I hope, a very jolly time ; we certainly did.







## CHAPTER XVI.

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### THREE TIGERS SURPRISED AND SHOT ON FOOT.

(District Betul, C.P., 1884.)

On returning from Australia to India several weeks before my leave expired, I accepted an invitation from my old friend W. K. (Mr. W. King, D. F. O.) to come and have a hot weather shoot with him in his district.

The place selected was a very wild one, there being no villages thereabouts, so we had to take a standing camp of beaters, some 60 men, with us and also a complete supply of food for them.

On arriving at the scene we found that the jungles had lately been burnt for miles round, leaving only patches of cover here and there, such as in the clefts of the hills, etc., where it had escaped the fire. Consequently, our calculations as to the resorts of the wild animals were completely thrown out, for there was now no knowing where they were, most of their usual haunts having been burnt out, so the animals were now scattered to the most out-of-the-way and unexpected places.

On the morning after our arrival, our shikaries reported that no less than four of our buffs had been killed, and that there was a whole colony of tigers.

On examining the kills we found that the stupid fellows had tied a string of buffs all along the bed of one river, so that even one tiger walking up the river-bed would probably have killed all the buffs in turn one after the other, as they stood half a mile apart.

The second great mistake was that all the buffs had been tied with such strong ropes, that the tigers had been unable to break any of them, so that there was no drag and nothing whatever over the hard rocks to show in which direction they had gone after killing and eating the buffs. However, the tracks in the sand of the river-bed showed that a family of four large tigers had been at work together. But where had they gone?

We appealed to our shikari, for he knew the jungles and we did not, whereupon he pointed up at the sides of the hills and said that we would find the tigers in some of the grassy clefts which had escaped being burnt, for on former occasions he had always found them there.

To the objection that those slopes could not possibly have water on them, he loftily said "what do tigers want with water now when they have already drunk in the river at night." Quite so, quite so, oh wisest of all shikaris, for did'st thou not see those tigers sunning themselves on these very slopes during the winter months, so of course, now at the height of the hot weather season, what more natural than that they should again sun themselves in the same place? But oh, bravest of the brave, is there no water on the tops of those hills, be quite sure in thy reply my cunning one? "No, Sahib, there is not a drop of water on top of those hills for miles, for has not your servant searched every yard of these jungles during the last ten days, in preparation for your lordship's coming."

We were nonplussed; the man swore he had searched the whole country and that there was no water except that contained in the river, around which all the cover within half a mile of it had been burnt.

Now, during the heat of a hot weather day, tigers cannot bear to be away for five minutes from water, and can be only driven from it at such a time by force, when they become very savage and dangerous. So we did not know what to think, and as we had at the moment no other suggestion to make, we gave in to the shikari and did as he wanted us to, having failed to track the tigers over the rocks and leaves.

So we beat the sides of the hills, with of course no results whatever. Then followed a series of speculative beats, with the same non-success. The heat was terrible, and at last both the beaters and ourselves were fairly cooked. So we all withdrew again to the river-bed from whence we had started and had breakfast. We now did what we ought to have done in the beginning, namely, we fetched out our large scale map and put our heads together to reason the matter out, with the help of a few local men.

A reference to the sketch map, herewith attached, will at a glance explain the situation. Hitherto we had been wasting our time beating





the hillsides shown in the left or western half of the map, whereas the home of the tigers was right up on the top of the hills to the east. They had apparently left it on the night previous going north ; then dropping into the river-bed to the west, marched down it till they came on to kill No. 1, and, having disposed of it, continued down the river-bed and dealt similarly with kills Nos. 2, 3, and 4. At this point one would have thought, if they had their home up on top of the hill, that they would naturally go up the bed of the *nalla* whose mouth is marked P on the sketch map. But we had already examined the sandy bed of this *nalla* for several hundred yards and found no footmarks therein, which led us into believing that the shikari was right in saying that there was no water up in that direction and hence the tigers, in our opinion, had not gone up there. Had we taken out and consulted our map in the first instance we would have saved ourselves a lot of trouble and fatigue, for we now saw from the map that the *nalla* which ran from the point P apparently straight north into the hills, turned after about half a mile and ran almost due south again coming in this manner to within a few hundred yards of the main river, from whence it ran finally north right up into the tops of the hills, where it had its source.

The whole thing now seemed as clear as daylight, provided there was water up in the top of the hill somewhere, in which hope we were encouraged, by having already noted signs of clay in several parts of these hills. If there was water as we suspected up towards the source of the *nalla*, we knew now that the tigers would naturally take the short-cut across from the level bed of the main river, into the *nalla* at the point S, rather than clamber, in their heavily gorged state, up the longer and roundabout way from its mouth at P.

The native shikari still persisted that there was no water up in that direction, so W. K. and I determined to first reconnoitre alone, taking only one man with us in case we might want to send for the beaters.

The space between the main river and the *nalla* consisted of hard rock, on which no tracks of any kind could be seen, but the moment we dropped into the bed of the *nalla* our suspicions were confirmed,

for here were the night tracks of all four tigers going straight up the *nalla*.

We then came on signs of clay, and also found some Parkar and Burr trees, all signs of water ; further on a hole in the ground, where an old bear had dug for water ; then some damp earth surrounded by swarms of hornets busy in extracting the moisture. The further we advanced the cooler and greener became the aspect, while the footmarks of the tigers, both old and new, showed that this neighbourhood had been their home for some time past.

The beaters were forgotten, for our scent was too hot and we were expecting to see the four tigers jump up before us at any moment, for we were now stalking them in earnest, with our pockets full of cartridges and eyes alertly peering into every nook and cranny before and around us.

At last we came on several pools of water, real water, oh that veracious shikari ! Here we could actually smell the tigers, who had apparently only left one of the pools a few minutes before, in order to avoid the rays of the sun as it came round over the spot where the marks in the soft damp sand showed that the tigers had been lying, the patch of sunlight just covering the marks, showing the time of the departure of the tigers from thence, as on a sun-dial.

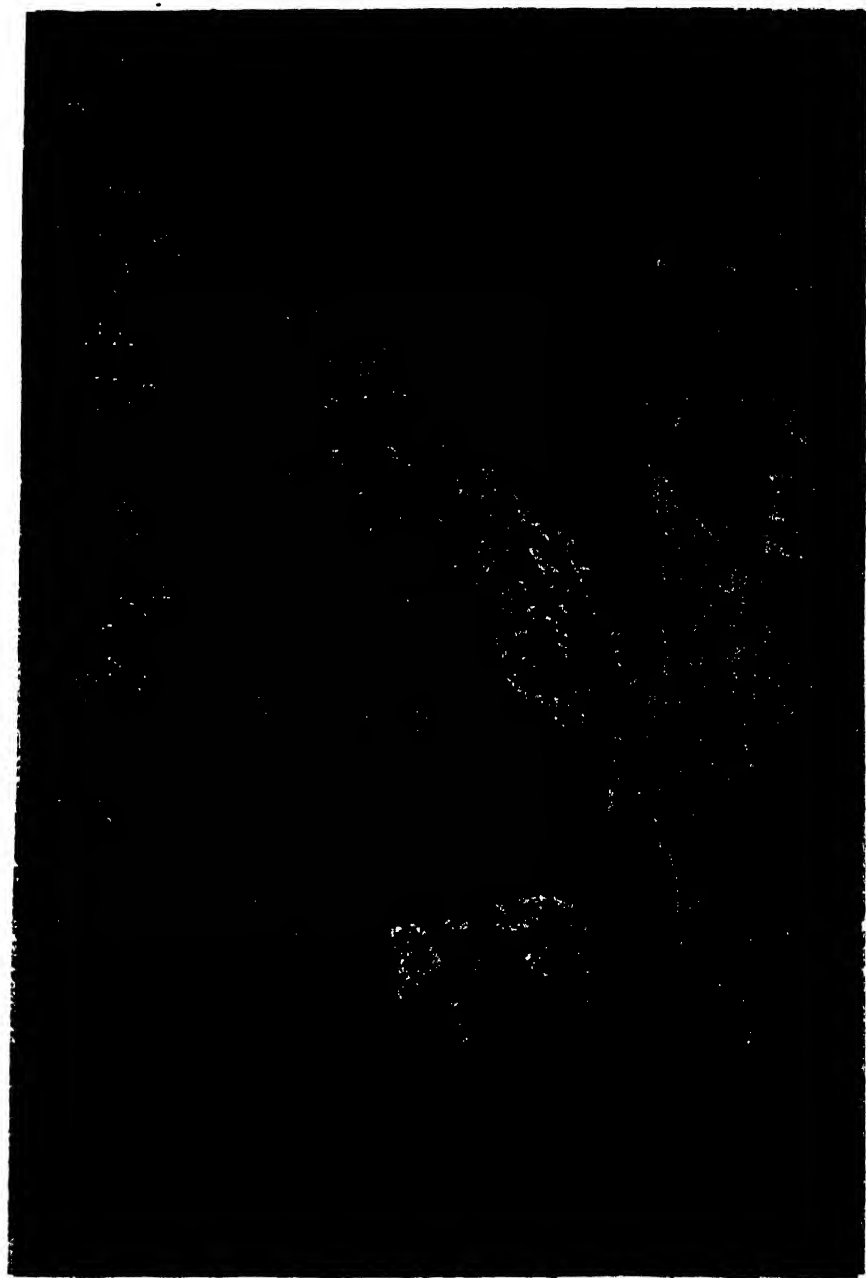
We knew that the tigers must now be at another pool, perhaps within a few yards of us, for we were moving absolutely silently on the soft sand, so we got on to the higher bank to our left so as to obtain a better command of whatever was in the bed of the *nalla*.

Looking over a rock into a pool below me I noticed that the water was shimmering, and on craning forward to try and see what had caused it, I was just in time to see the hind-quarters of a tiger disappearing round the elbow of the rock. I dashed round to intercept it, and in doing so came blundering on to a deep ditch which lay between me and W. K. I had to pull up sharp to prevent myself tumbling headlong on top of another tiger which was now almost below my feet. At the same time I heard W. K. fire to my left, and as my tiger rushed away on hearing his shot, I fired and bowled it over, emptying my second barrel into a third tiger which I saw standing on the opposite side of the river, and brought it tumbling down almost on top of W. K.'s tiger which was lying dead in the bed





A WARM CORNER







of the *nalia*. It appears W. K. also fired at this third tiger, simultaneously with me, and as neither heard the other's shot we each claimed the third tiger.

However, three tigers killed dead between us in about three seconds, was pretty good, so we hardly had a right to complain at the fourth tiger getting off free because our guns were empty, though we did complain, each saying that the other ought to have shot it instead of interfering with "my tiger". The oldest of us will be boys at such moments.

All the previous hardships of the day were now forgotten and we were as happy as a couple of schoolboys in having bagged three tigers off our own bat without any one's help, for we found also that the man whom we had brought with us had disappeared at the critical moment. Half an hour later he turned up, bringing with him the beaters, and on my twitting him for his cowardice, W. K., who is an Irishman, ejaculated : "and sure your annarr, did oi not run to fetch you help?"

My old friend is now in Ireland, and long may he live to enjoy such reminiscences.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### SUCCESSFUL RIGHT AND LEFT AT BISON.

(*Extracts from Diary, December '75. Mysore States.*)

'24th December—*Camp Shimoga*. F. and I going to Shinker Forests for Xmas. Will try for bison during holidays. Macgann and Marsden off to the Lackwalli jungles.

" 25th December—*Camp Siregerrie*. Xmas day. F. and I wandered over the remains of some old forts or "Droogs," now quite deserted and overgrown with jungle, very interesting. Saw lots of bison tracks.

" 26th December—Stalked and shot a large bull bison in the foss of one of the old forts ; height at the shoulder 5 feet 10 inches.

" 27th December—Shot two bull bisons, right and left, while fighting. Got them with one bullet each."

These deserted old forts referred to above were generally situated on the flat tops of one of the many "Droogs" or isolated granite hills, covering an area in some cases of several hundred acres, encircled with a massive mud wall about twenty feet in height, broken and breached here and there, in the course of time, by the elements or by wild animals, who had converted these openings into regular "runs".

The area within these walls were full of the ruins of hundreds of old stone buildings, now a chaos of piled up slabs and boulders, choked in every direction with a rank jungle growth of brambles and grass.

Many of the buildings had obviously been blown up by gunpowder (probably by the British in the war with Tippoo Sultan) as was evinced by the thousands of broken fragments, some of them beautifully engraved, which lay scattered about the place.

Occasionally, some portions of the buildings were partially intact externally, though choked within, with the debris of fallen slabs and rubbish, covered with fungi and jungle growth. These dark and noisome retreats formed by the dank rooms and cellars within

swarmed with bats and snakes and other noxious reptiles, or formed occasionally the dens of panthers, bears or even tigers, who were frequently known to breed in these places.

In the spaces between the buildings were the remains of tanks, fountains and old dry wells, at the bottom of which we frequently saw one or more snakes and even the remains of animals, who had tumbled in by accident and had been unable to get out again.

The large granite boulders that lay piled about were the favourite haunts of numerous pythons, while the bramble thickets which filled up the intervening spaces were the resorts of sambar and wild pigs.

A beat conducted over one of these sites was almost a sure and easy find, for the animals could only escape by one of the few exits through the broken portions, where the guns would be posted.

Except on such occasions, these places are now never disturbed by man, for the natives consider them haunted by demons and ghosts ; and well they might, for they have been the scenes of many a dark and horrible tragedy in bygone days, when occupied by the ruthless robber chiefs who preyed on the innocent dwellers of the plains below. It were as if these once busy scenes had been cursed for the bloody deeds, and handed over to wild beasts and reptiles, and to the desolate solitudes of the jungles. Grim possibilities, indeed, and weirdly interesting to me and my wife as we wandered that Xmas morn over one of these places slumbering so peacefully in the soft yellow light of the morning sun.

I shot one of the pythons as he lay basking on some rocks ; he measured 9 feet 4 inches in length, and 13 inches in girth. There were lots of bison tracks about, so I made up my mind to have a look round these old ruins on the following morning. Next morning I was up early and off, and in time picked up the fresh tracks of a herd of bison, which finally led us right up to the top of one of these " Droogs," through a gap in the encircling wall into the enclosure above. The undergrowth here was very thick and we could scarcely see ten yards ahead of us ; to make matters worse the bison at this point had scattered, and the perverse beast of a bull had forced his way in among such frightful thorns, that we found it impossible to follow on his tracks. However, knowing we would be able to pick

it up again on ahead, we circled round along an animal track that led along under the shelter of the wall.

We were proceeding thus, when on nearing a gap in the wall, I thought I heard a sound of some animal shuffling about among the leaves on the further side of it ; so I peered cautiously into the foss below and there saw an old cow bison leisurely browsing on some young bambu leaves, while further on were three or four more with an immature bull similarly occupied. But where was the bull whose tracks we had been following ? They were certainly not those of the bull now before us. I was on the point of giving them up and going on to look elsewhere, when a movement of a portion of an object, on the further bank lower down, caught my eye. I had at first glance taken it to be a rock, but it now proved to be the big bull lying down, who by a shake of his head had exposed his identity.

Crawling with the help of one of my men up to the top of the wall, I lay down under the shelter of a bush that was growing on the top of it, almost opposite, and within thirty yards of the recumbent bull. From this point of vantage I had the big bull at my mercy, so lay still for a time and watched the habits of these interesting animals for nearly half an hour, when the bull appeared to get a bit uneasy and rising to his feet, he came down into the foss below, evidently with the intention of joining the cows, so I thought it time to fire for fear he should give me the slip. Aiming just behind the spot where his dorsal ridge ended, so as to hit him in one of the vital portions, either in the liver, kidneys or the backbone, I let drive with a spherical smooth-bore bullet, which struck him in the latter, breaking his back and putting him spread-eagled on to the ground, where he lay helpless and paralyzed. I hurried down to put him out of pain, and I shall never forget the pitiful look of hopeless terror in his blue eyes, as I did so. I had had enough for that day so I then went home. Next morning I was out again, and this time I was privileged to see a fight between two bull bisons.

We were proceeding through some beautiful park-like jungle when I heard the bellows of bison some distance ahead followed at intervals by several sharp cracks and the tracker whispered to me that the bisons were having a fight among themselves. Being anxious to witness such a unique sight, I pushed on alone, working







round to the leeward of the spot where the sound came from, and at length approached an open glade. Creeping quietly up behind a bush, I beheld two bull bisons in the middle of the glade, boring against each other with their heads. Gradually one of them was borne further and further back until he reached the edge of the arena, when he immediately disengaged and trotted round to the further end while the victor stood and looked on without making any attempt to go after him. I had evidently arrived at the end of one of the rounds, when "time" was called. "Time" being up they again approached each other with the pawing action of a high-stepping horse, head and tail both carried high, nostril widely dilated and snorting fiercely, a truly grand sight, until they arrived within about twenty yards of each other, when suddenly, down went both their heads simultaneously as with a bellow of rage they dashed like lightning towards each other, their heads meeting with a most terrific *crash!* sufficient, one would have thought, to smash both their heads into a pulp. But it apparently had not the slightest effect on them, for the tedious boring process commenced again—I push you ten yards and you push me ten yards kind of business—until one or the other was finally pushed back to the edge of the clearing when the whole performance was repeated over again.

Of course the most exciting and picturesque part was the approach and the charge. Three or four of these rounds were enacted before me, when one of the bulls with a sudden rush bore the other one down and knocked him over, and immediately commenced to prod him viciously in his side with his horns, so that it was some seconds before the fallen bull could regain his feet, and having done so he promptly fled, but this time pursued for some distance by his enemy, who prodded him vigorously behind in order to keep him on the run.

The victor then halted but the vanquished continued his flight straight past my position, and seeing that the performance was over for that day, I plunged a bullet in behind the shoulder of the fleeing bull, who stumbled on a few more paces and then fell heavily forward on to his knees and nose, shot through the heart.

I rushed forward to obtain a shot at the second bull and just succeeded in getting a snap at him as he was in the act of jumping

a fallen log. I saw him catch his feet on one of the branches projecting from the log, and go head over heels on the further side. I had scored a fluke, indeed, for on going up to him I found that my bullet had struck him at the back of his head and had brained him.

I was very well pleased, for I had not only witnessed the fight, but had also secured both the bulls engaged in it.

I now understood more fully the use for the enormous development of bone in the forehead of bison; for if this is the way they fight, they need every bit of it.

In Mysore, I found that bison were in the habit of following herds of wild elephants. The reason for this was that elephants are very wasteful creatures in their wild state, leaving behind them three parts of the tall bambus, branches, etc., which they pull down for food; consequently bison follow in their wake in order to pick up the succulent morsels left behind which otherwise would have been out of their reach. Being thus accustomed to the companionship of elephants, bison pay no attention whatever when a tame elephant comes on the scene, that is to say, in localities where they are accustomed to seeing wild elephants about, and in such places it is the easiest thing in the world for sportsmen, by mounting a tame elephant and throwing a black *cumli* (native blanket) over himself, to get right in among a herd of bison without being noticed, provided he takes the precaution of approaching them to the leeward of the wind. I frequently got in among bison in this manner, and took my pick. In fact after a time I gave up shooting these splendid beasts altogether, for it was too much like shooting tame cattle.

On the whole, I think the difficulties of stalking bison have been greatly overrated. It is true that they frequently inhabit more inaccessible places, but having arrived on the ground, I see no reason why the sportsman should find them more difficult to stalk than other *ungulata* in such places. Their powers of scent and hearing are certainly very keen, but so are those of other ruminants, while I am inclined to think that their powers of sight are not so sharp.

Before finally quitting the subject of this most interesting animal, I will indulge in a few more general remarks.

The best time for stalking bison is from dawn till about 10 A.M., for they are then still on the move, when, for reasons explained in the chapter on Stalking, it is very much easier for the sportsman to manœuvre up to them.

From 10 A.M. at latest till 4 P.M., they are engaged in that most necessary performance, chewing the cud.

Being very shy animals they retire at this time to the most inaccessible places, as far as possible from all human habitations, generally at the top of the highest hill or tableland in the neighbourhood, where the old bull frequently selects a spot under some shady bambu clump at the very brink of some frightful precipice, in which to pass the heat of the day ; thus protected from attack by the precipice on one side, he depends entirely on his keen senses of scent and hearing to warn him of the approach of any possible enemy on the other. When lying quietly in this manner without any sounds of movement around them, they are extremely difficult to stalk successfully, which of course is the fault of the sportsman in not selecting a better time.

On reaching such a place lately deserted by bison, the sportsman will notice a peculiar smell about the spot like a freshly opened cowhouse, while here and there he will see little heaps of foam that have been dropped by the bison while chewing the cud. The smell of a freshly killed animal that is not very old is very strong though not unpleasant, and stronger generally when he has been secured after a long chase, which gives one the impression that the animal has been sweating. But the scent of an old bull after a long chase is decidedly unpleasant, there being a visible amount of oily perspiration on his hind-quarters up to as far as his dorsal ridge, which looks somewhat like gas-tar. It is of little use to try beating for bison, for they almost invariably break back over the beaters, or through the stops, anywhere except in front of the gun, especially if the beat be a noisy one, in which respect they are like samber.

In numbers, the largest herd that I have seen was in Mysore which I computed roughly to consist of about sixty bison ; but the largest that I actually counted one by one, consisted of 37 animals, on the Mahadeo Range in the Central Provinces. Sometimes solitary bulls will be met with, who, with the advance of age, have been

driven away from their herds by younger and stronger bulls ; these bulls are much more uncertain in temper and I have known several cases in which they have charged people without the least provocation.

Wounded bulls, when pursued, frequently double on their own tracks, or rather to one side of them and hiding behind a bush until the hunter passes, they charge out at him from the side or from behind, taking him generally completely by surprise. In this they sometimes exhibit great cunning by actually *stalking* the unconscious hunter by creeping up silently from behind on tip toe like a Mouse deer, before they actually charge ; fortunately they generally take some moments in making up their minds to execute the latter move, which may give the hunter a chance of knocking him over before the animal has screwed up sufficient courage to charge home. I had a narrow escape myself from a wounded bison in this way on one occasion, of which I have spoken elsewhere.

Sometimes three or four young bulls not quite in their prime may be found together, fellows in misfortune who are only biding their time, having been driven away from the herds by older and stronger bulls.

The ordinary call of a bison is very much like a note on a bugle ; their alarm call is a shrill kind of whistle. Never use a shell on bison, it is cruelty ; you may kill them sometimes in this way, but more often only inflict a surface wound and they get away to die a horrible and painful death. A large bore, solid, soft lead bullet propelled with a sufficiently strong charge of powder is the best, but the bullet must have a large striking surface, which does much more real damage, gives a greater shock to the system, and leaves more blood to follow on, than do the small bullets from modern rifles. For close shooting in thick jungles, where the majority of animals fired at are well within sixty yards, I found nothing suited me better for bison than an ordinary 12-gauge smooth-bore, *both* barrels shooting spherical soft lead bullets and 4 drams of powder. Never take a gun into the jungles that has either of the barrels "choked," they are a great nuisance and also very dangerous, for one is very apt in the excitement of the moment to cram bullets into *both* barrels with disastrous results.

When bison are out in the open, a stalking horse can often be used successfully ; on one occasion I rode on horseback bending down low, quite close to a herd of bison before they discovered me.

One often reads of the enormous damage done by bison to the crops grown by the jungle tribes, but the fact is that there are few such tribes who do not actually grow these crops purely and simply in order to *attract* the bison, in localities where these abound, in order to trap them by various ingenious methods. The usual way is by having a high bambu fence round the field, leaving gaps here and there, obstructed only by a small two feet jump ; on the inside of each of these gaps, a deep " V " shaped pit is dug with one or more sharp pointed stakes driven into the bottom, the points being upwards ; the pit is then covered over with light branches and grass, on top of which again dry earth is spread, giving it the appearance of solid ground. The bison wandering about at night, seeing an easy road to the tempting green crop within, jump over the slight obstruction in the gap, and of course tumble right in on top of the sharp pointed stakes in the pit beyond, where they impale themselves, their bodies being wedged and held up as it were by the narrow sides of the " V " ; their feet do not reach the bottom of the pit, so having no purchase for their feet, they are unable to scramble or jump out again and are found thus next morning, generally dead.

Another way is by snaring them with a noose set in a clear gap. There are several ways in which this is done, the most effective being as follows : a gap is made in the hedge at a point where a stout young sapling, some twenty or thirty feet high, is growing ; a rope with a slipknot at the end of it is then tied to the top of the sapling, which is then bent down in the form of a bow with the united strength of a number of men, being secured thus to a catch in the gap, on the mouse trap principle ; the noose [which is made of either bison's hide, young crushed bambu or the " monkey-rope " creeper (*bale*), all three when green being enormously strong] is then cunningly arranged in the gap, so that the bison in passing through puts one of its feet through it and in moving forward draws it taut at the same time releasing the catch, with the result that the bent sapling springs back, jerking the ensnared limb violently, high up off the ground. The bison is now like a fish at the end of

a rod, and however much it may frantically struggle, the pliant rod only bends but does not break and soon exhausts the strength of the huge beast, who is found by the men in the morning lying helplessly on its side panting and foaming at the mouth. Seeing them coming up the poor brute again renews its frantic efforts to escape, until it is put out of its misery by the arrows and spears of the grinning little aborigines who dance round it in glee.

Natives frequently use these sapling traps on animal tracks which run round on the face of some steep hillside or precipitous drop, so that the snared animal is jerked off the track and hangs dangling over the side where it dies in the course of a few hours.

These nooses are generally so cunningly hid with an arrangement of leaves and grass, that it is often impossible to notice them, so that both these and the pits are extremely dangerous to human beings as well; in this kind of country, always be very careful how you jump through a gap in a hedge. The meat of an adult bison is as tough as old boots and quite beyond the average European to manage, though natives, whose caste does not forbid the eating of beef, seem to relish it.

Bison marrow too is tough and hard like a tallow candle; but the hide of the bison is very useful for a great number of purposes, being very thick and enduring; if stretched when freshly skinned over a wicker frame they make very good boats, one of which I used for a long time for duck shooting in Mysore. I should have mentioned that the trapping of bison or any animal is illegal in Government forests, though I am sorry to say that it is nevertheless indulged in pretty often in spite of the laws against it, and many scores of such individuals have I prosecuted in my time for indulging in this little game. I should like to see the law in this matter extended still further, and the penalties made still more stringent, if this noble and harmless beast is to be preserved from rapidly approaching extinction.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### A DANGEROUS FINAL WITH A WOUNDED TIGER.

*(Khursani, District Chindwara, 4th April 1887.)*

In the beginning of my Diary of the year 1887 I see a note as follows :—" During the past season (winter, till January) bagged 6 tigers, 2 panthers, 4 bears and lots of small fry."

Also a note regarding our Christmas camp at Bordai from the 24th to 27th December 1886, giving our bag as " 2 panthers, one stag cheetle, 4 bears, 5 four-horned deer, 6 hares and 9 jungle-fowl," which is a fair bag for casual beats, etc., during four days, fair for the Central Provinces at any rate.

Thereafter my Diary shows regarding big game as follows :—

28-1-87. Camp Kokut—5 chitas shot, speared or run down with dogs.

21-2-87. Camp Sarasdole—shot a very large tigress

15-3-87. Camp Sark—shot 2 tigers before breakfast.

16-3-87.       ,,       found a sounder of pig; after some fun speared two boars, killing both.

24-3-87. Camp Ghogry—shot a very large tiger, length 9' 10".

4-4-87. Camp Khursani—shot a male tiger.

10-4-87. Camp Saktu—shot a large panther.

28-4-87. Camp Kona, Pindrai—shot a tiger.

Of these the Khursani tiger gave me the warmest time.

I was at Sark when I received a report from my Ranger to the effect that this tiger had attacked and killed the village blacksmith on the forest road, while returning from a neighbouring village where he had been plying his trade.

It seemed the tiger had killed a Brinjara bullock, and was engaged in eating it when the man passed by, whereupon he left the bullock and killed and ate the man instead.

The fact that he had eaten the man in preference to the bullock made me suspect that he might become, if he was not already, a



confirmed man-eater, and as I had not long since had a very hard job in ridding the district of some confirmed man-eaters at Lohungi, I thought it advisable to take this gentleman in time.

Accordingly, I arrived at Khursani on the 3rd of April, and tied out buffs for him.

On the morning of the 4th, news was brought in that the tiger had killed and taken away one of the buffs and, as I had previously made all our arrangements regarding beaters, we were able to make an early start fortunately, for it eventually proved that we had to deal with an exceptionally tough customer.

On arriving at the scene in the Duddy-ghat forests, we found the jungles here a dead level, without a single natural feature which we could utilize in our favour.

Moreover, the villagers stated that this tiger was a stranger, having turned up suddenly about three weeks ago ; so they were unacquainted with either his habits or his character, except that he had killed one of their men

The fact that he had first been found eating a brinjara bullock pointed to the probability to his having followed up a migration of some Brinjara camp, perhaps following them for over a hundred miles, as they often do ; so nothing could be known of his real character in his former haunts, where he may have been a man-eater. So I had nothing whatever to help me, except instinct and my knowledge of the game in general.

The kill had been tied by a small *jhira* or jungle pool of water, and the foot marks in the mud showed the tiger to be a very fine male. The kill had been dragged to the north, and being a new arrival in the neighbourhood, and there being no other water within a convenient distance, I concluded that the tiger would probably be somewhere in the level jungle, in the direction in which he had dragged off his kill.

It is often asked : " What one is to do when there are no natural leads from, to or up which to beat a tiger ?" In such a case, do as we did in this case ; simply chop out, as it were, a piece of level jungle in which you have reason to think the tiger is, and enclose it with your beaters and stops.

This is what we did and we successfully enclosed the tiger.

Call it luck if you like, if it is only luck that secured in one season, during the ordinary course of work, eleven tigers, five cheetas, three panthers, four bears, without any "big" *bundobust* or other special arrangements.

The jungle and grass were frightfully dense, so that I was not aware of the arrival of the tiger until he pushed his way suddenly through the grass below my tree.

He saw the start of surprise I gave, and bounded off; but too late to entirely escape the snap-shot I managed to get in at him. My bullet caught him too far back in the ribs, so he was able to escape for the time being.

I had placed my orderly, however, about three hundred yards behind my position, in case of such an accident, who marked him into a patch of grass, apparently very sick, for he had not left it. So I had the patch of grass immediately surrounded by men up trees, while I myself poked about trying to get a sight of the tiger.

From time to time the men up in the trees in different parts called out that they could see him, and I climbed up their trees in succession and peppered away at the bush or clump of grass where they said the tiger was lying, and apparently succeeded in hitting him a number of times, by the way in which he spoke to my shots.

At last he broke out of our ring and made off, unseen by me. And now came the dangerous part, for in having to follow him up we might come upon him at any moment unawares. Hitherto we had known whereabouts he was, so had been comparatively safe; but now it was a very different tale.

Of course I ought to have sent back to camp for my dogs and buffs but my blood was up, so I slithered down my tree and got on to the blood trail, which was ample.

I only allowed one man to come with me to carry my spare gun, for it would be a fearful thing to have a wounded tiger running amok among a crowd of unarmed beaters (if they were armed, I would rather be somewhere else), nor were the latter loth to keep well back. It was terribly risky work, so I had to be extremely careful, and sent my orderly up a tree every fifteen or twenty yards or so to reconnoitre and to throw stones.

We had proceeded in this manner perhaps some three hundred yards, when my orderly, who had climbed into a tree, called out from above to me telling me to be careful, for he could see the tiger looking in my direction only about 25 yards off.

I could not see the tiger, so I commenced to climb the tree to try and get a shot from thence.

I had climbed up about eight feet, when the tiger apparently caught sight of me and charged with a roar. I succeeded in swinging myself out of his reach just in time, but in my hurry I dropped my rifle—and there we were like a couple of fools up the tree with the tiger at the foot looking longingly up at us.

He looked as much a cure as we did, however, for he had been rolling in the pool and had got covered over with black slime which had caked on him, especially his head which was almost quite black. He watched us here like a cat, for about half a minute and then went off. From our perch we could see him for about fifty yards as he retreated, when we immediately descended and secured our arms. From the view we had had of him, I knew he was in a very bad way and could not possibly go far, for he seemed to be simply riddled with wounds. I was also feeling angry at having been made a fool of, for had I remained on the ground I might have got him as he came at me, or perhaps he might have got me! So we at once took up his trail and advanced as before.

After about a hundred yards, the trail suddenly led into a hollow, full of dense tall grass, into which it would have been madness to follow. So I sent my man back to fetch up the beaters in order to ring him round, while he returned to camp to fetch my dogs and some buffs, for I was certain that the tiger would not leave this grass in the state he was in.

In the meanwhile, I was standing on the bank, when suddenly I heard a growl in the grass below me about thirty yards away, and at the same time made out by the swaying in the grass that the tiger was coming for me.

I had every advantage over him now being well above him on the bank, so did not feel in the least put out by his noisy demonstration, but waited quietly with my rifle at my shoulder for him to appear.





The grass was so thick, however, that I did not see him until he was almost under my feet, when he suddenly reared himself up, looking like a huge hyæna with his blackened face.

He never got any further, for my shot struck him in his throat, and the second bullet in his head as he lay in a heap, which finished him. I found that no less than ten bullets had struck this tiger, several of which, in an ordinary tiger, would have been sufficient to have laid him low.

It is an interesting fact that some tigers are undoubtedly endowed with extra stamina, which enables them to stand far more physical hurt than others, for while some tigers succumb instantly to certain shots, similarly placed shots on another tiger of stronger stamina only appear to make him livelier than ever. I have noticed this time after time in my experience.

However, in following up this tiger in the manner I did, I admit I made a fool of myself and deserved to have been killed.

This tiger was nearly as large as the tiger I shot at Ghogry a fortnight before.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### BISON STALKING IN THE SACRABILE FORESTS AND MYSORE.

*A propos* of the presence of bison in Southern India, the following are a few extracts from my diary for the year 1875, while on deputation in the Mysore State :—

“ 9th January, *Camp Coompesy*.—Nine miles from Shimoga, jungles very thick. There are lots of bison here.

“ 13th January, *Camp Shimoga*.—Found Macgann and Butcher here. Latter left for Nugger after bison.

“ 16th January, *Camp Thiratulli*.—Found my old friend Dobbie (Imperial Survey Department). Had dinner with him. Major and Mrs. Gompertz (I. G. Police) passed through from Nugger ; said Butcher had shot a very fine bull bison. G. lost a tiger in a beat, which went and stood under Mrs. G.'s tree for some time.

“ 25th January, *Camp Tincabile*.—Dobbie and I went after bison. I shot one bull, with good, but not long, horns. Dobbie left for head-quarters.

“ 30th January.—Marched from Mandlegatta to Sacrabile bungalow. Saw lots of bison tracks. Met S., the Executive Engineer, on the road ; he had been staying at the bungalow for several days, but got nothing ; told me there were no animals in the country. He laughed as he accepted my bet that I would shoot a bison within three miles of the bungalow.

“ 31st January, *Camp Sacrabile*.—Stalked and shot a fine bison, under three miles from the bungalow. Won my bet with S.”

From the frequent references to bison in the above, it will be seen that I was travelling in fairly good bison country. But it is strange how some sportsmen, from not keeping their eyes open, will sometimes be in the neighbourhood of big game and yet not know it, simply because they take the word of a lazy native shikari and will not take the trouble to look for themselves.

Having already sent out reliable men to mark down good bulls, I started out on the morning after my arrival at Sacrabile to see to matters myself.

Two herds were reported to be within two miles of the bungalow, so my wife, who had not yet seen a bison, made me promise to try and bring one into camp, if it were at all possible to do so.

This was a very tall order in such broken country, for though I have never actually weighed these animals, I should say that the weight of a big bull bison would be well over half a ton. The only other alternative would have been for "Mahomet to come to the Mountain," but this was out of the question as the country was far too broken and the jungles far too thick for a lady to negotiate. So I promised to do my best to bring one in.

Although it was yet early in the year, the ground was thickly carpeted with dead leaves, so that the noise made by every living thing that moved over them was something appalling to hunters who habitually stalk by stealth only. I think it must have been for this reason that many sportsmen shirked these jungles during these seasons, and only went after bison during the rains, braving the certainty of getting fever by doing so.

A decidedly unpleasant, though somewhat ludicrous, incident spoilt my chance with the first herd. In Mysore, a large species of cobra is occasionally met with, called the Hamadryad; it is very much larger and a more offensive serpent than the ordinary cobra, with an equally deadly venom, frequently attacking people, or pursuing them for a considerable distance, without the least provocation.

I was peering cautiously through an overhanging bambu clump, at the bison beyond, trying to locate the bull, when I heard a vicious hiss at the base of the clump, and, on looking down, saw a Hamadryad coiled with his head raised within four feet of me. In a thoughtless moment I made a jab and pinned him against the clump with the muzzle of my gun about 18 inches from his head, and then the fun began. Time after time he struck the barrels with his fangs, hissing fiercely and leaving flecks of foam on it each time, while the remainder of his body coiled, twisted and lashed about with impotent rage in every direction. Keeping well out of the reach of his head, I pressed down with my gun for my life, for my thoughtless action had put me in a great fix, for I dared not fire in that position for fear of bursting the gun, nor did I dare release



him, for I knew the enraged brute would then attack me like a flash of lightning and one bite from those fangs meant a certain and frightful death within a few minutes. I was in an extremely critical position, when I remembered my hunting knife. But the beast was now frantic, and I had great difficulty in holding him down even with two hands, so I had to wait till he became more exhausted, when I drew the knife quickly and struck off a piece about two feet from his tail in order to disable him from making any subsequent spring when I released him. Then watching my opportunity, I suddenly sprang back, striking at the brute's head with the barrels of my gun as I did so. The blow luckily struck him and partially stunned him for a time, when I polished him off with a big stone pounding his head to pieces. About the worst sixty seconds I ever had in my life which gave me a decidedly nasty turn, for it was no joke to have death in such a frightful form waving and darting about within six inches of one's body, feeling for a time absolutely helpless in averting it. I have faced death in many forms, but never felt as I did on this occasion. Knowing the reputation these serpents have for fierceness, I was an idiot to have acted in the first instance in the manner I did. The brute that had given me such a bad time measured only six feet in length.

The flecks of foam on the barrels of my gun I suspected were poison, so I cleaned them well, first wiping them with a bunch of leaves and then scrubbing them with sand and water, before I handled them.

The second herd of bison marked down were on the further side of the bungalow, so on my way to it, I dropped in at the latter and had a cup of tea and a chat, and then went on refreshed.

We came on the bison rather unexpectedly, for we had not yet taken up their tracks when we ran into them. We had just topped a small bambu covered ridge, with a narrow gully between us and the plateau beyond, when the tracker in front halted and pointed ahead. There they all were, about twelve of them, standing or lying about, a couple of hundred yards away, quite unconscious of our presence, the wind being in our favour. The big bull of the party was lying to our right about forty yards from the brink of the gully that lay between us, so leaving the two men behind, I slipped unseen





out of sight into the gully, from whence the stalk was an easy one, for under the shelter of the bank, I was able to get up within forty yards of the bull, whose head being diagonally away from me gave me the opportunity of braining him with a shot behind the ear. The poor brute was quite unconscious of his danger, so it was with some compunction that I fired ; upon which he turned over on to his back with all four legs stuck up stiffly in the air.

It was an enormous beast, as big as a small elephant, measuring six feet at the shoulder, so I scratched my head to think how on earth I was to take such a monster, over such ground, to camp.

Sending the men off immediately to fetch as many men and axes as they could, and also a cart and two pairs of bullocks, I sat down to think. I was almost certain that no country cart would be big enough to hold this enormous beast ; so whatever we would be able to do, would depend probably on the number of men that turned up. I was still thinking when a couple of hours later a gang of about thirty men arrived, and soon after them a cart, by a roundabout way.

We turned the cart over on to its side (which is the way in which large logs are usually got on board them) and levered and rolled the bison up against it, when it became hopelessly apparent that the beast was far too large to be contained by the cart, and even if it had, i would have broken down at the first uneven piece of ground, so we were nonplussed for the time being, so sat down to consider how else we might do it, for I had made a promise, and I meant to keep it by hook or by crook.

Suddenly an idea occurred to me, which I ought to have thought of before. There were lots of bambus about, so I would construct a sleigh. Sending twenty men with axes to clear a roadway through the forest, the remainder set to work and in a very short time constructed a stout bambu sleigh as shown in the illustration. In the latter I am afraid the artist has given a wrong idea of the scenery, but that is a minor detail. Cutting down a sapling with a forked end, we shoved the latter end under the sleigh and secured it firmly. Then raising the other end of the pole we secured it on to the yoke of the first pair of bullocks, thus raising the front portion of the sleigh completely off the ground, which enabled it to pass over obstacles without catching on them.

We then rolled the bull on to the sleigh and secured it, and, with the aid of four stout bullocks and a number of men, commenced to drag the ponderous beast through the jungle. Very slow was our progress with frequent interruptions, but we kept on doggedly, and overcame all obstacles, and at length reached camp in triumph.

Thus I kept my promise to one who is now gone.

## CHAPTER XX

### A SHIKARI'S DEATH.

There is the stoical indifference to pain of the Red Indian, and of the Australian "black" who, when he broke his leg in the bush, deliberately sat down and amputated his leg by burying it in the ground and *burnt* it off by making a fire round it; there is the indifference to death of the religious fanatic, moral courage, etc. But the courage with which we are concerned in sport is the cool self-reliance in face of death and danger.

Among the jungle tribes who, though poor half-savage creatures, for generations have had to rely on themselves in their eternal fight against wild animals and other forces of nature; how often have I had occasion to admire their cool self-reliance and daring in the face of most frightful danger. Instances such as a woman having a tug of war with a tiger for the body of her husband, a little boy, nine years old, beating a tiger with a stick off the body of a bullock which had been placed in his charge to graze, etc., etc., are occurrences which are occurring every day in the thousands of square miles of Indian forests—acts, were they to happen in a civilized country, would be published in big headlines in every paper in the world within a few hours; but here, if the bullock had not been materially injured, the boy would scarcely think it worth mentioning on his return home.

Firm believers in fate or "kaza," no medical science will save them when once they have made up their minds that their hour has come.

Though wrapped in superstitions of wood gods and demons when faced with a danger they understand, with which they have struggled for existence for generations, their conduct is often nothing less than heroic in the eyes of civilized people, though they themselves think nothing of it.

We look upon these simple people as savages and pity the darkness of their minds; they know nothing of the geography or conditions of the world outside a radius of ten miles of their own locality;

they think of course that the remainder of the world must necessarily also be all forests, rivers and hills, peopled by their superstitious imaginations with monstrous animals, *rakshas*, demons and other weird beings ; what a wondrous place they must picture the vast unknown, which to us, the more enlightened, is so prosaic. I have often envied their simple yet tragic life, still surrounded by the mysticisms of nature and romance ; for there is much more romance in the lives of these people than is ever guessed at by a casual outside observer, reared as they are from childhood in the atmosphere of weird legends of the exploits of mythical heroes battling with demons, sorcerers and wild animals.

There was a village, in the heart of the jungles on the banks of the great Narbudda River, about nine miles from Mundla, where lived two brothers who were rivals for the hand of the same " forest maiden fair." The maid, however, could not make up her mind as to which she would have, so she decreed that she would give her hand to the one who should first slay, and bring to her the skin of, the great tiger who haunted the jungles near her village. Now, these two brothers were also shikaris, in which also they were rivals, each possessing an old single-barrel flint-lock gun. So being thus dared, they both at once set off for the tiger's lair with which they were well acquainted, each expecting that the other would perhaps draw back at the last moment, if the other only went on long enough. But they were both of equal grit, so at last they came right up to the tiger, who at once jumped up and stood growling at them. One of the brothers thereupon immediately fired his gun at him, and being terrified at the awful roar that followed, he bolted, leaving his brother to his fate ; the latter boldly stood his ground and fired at the tiger as it rolled on the ground, but had the bad luck to miss him, and the next moment he was in the jaws of the infuriated animal, who, however, did not kill him outright, but having mauled and shaken him, withdrew into the grass, where he lay down about ten feet off and watched him like a cat would a mouse.

When he recovered himself somewhat, the unfortunate man crawled to his empty gun and reloaded it, and then raised it with difficulty to his shoulder ; it was only then that the tiger apparently realized that he was up to mischief, and raising himself from his lair







in the grass, began to advance snarling towards the man, trying to intimidate him ; but the eyes behind that unflinching tube never wavered, so that the tiger thought better of it at the last moment and swerved to one side, when at the same moment the gun, which had been aimed at his head, exploded, and the tiger bounded into the jungle with a roar. It was proved afterwards that the last bullet blew out the roof of his mouth, for the tiger's teeth were lying on the ground.

The other brother, in the meanwhile, had run straight to the village and gave out that the tiger had killed his brother, upon which the girl who had caused the disaster, at once headed a party to rescue her lover, and succeeded in bringing him alive to the village.

The news was at once brought in to me at Mundla, from whence I and a brother officer of my service at once started for the scene.

On our arrival we found the poor fellow still alive, and he gave us the account of what had happened, but did not mention the part the lady had played in the matter, for natives are very shy of talking of private matters of this kind. I did not hear this part of the story until months afterwards, from my subordinates, when I again revisited the place.

We offered to send the man into hospital, but he refused, saying that the only thing that would save his life would be for us to recover the body of the tiger, otherwise he knew that his hour had come, and he would rather die at home. This is an old native superstition that if the body of the tiger, which has mauled a man, is recovered in proof of it being dead, the man will not die ; the idea being in such cases, that one or the other *must* die, if not the tiger, then the man.

We hunted for that tiger high and low but, though after events show that we probably passed and repassed within a few feet of him time after time while he was still alive, we never found him. The man of course died.

A couple of days afterwards the rains burst, and all the débris in the gullies and little jungle nallas was swept down into the Narbudda.

All the Europeans of the station were collected at the Gardens in the evening, when some men came to us in haste from the river and reported that they had just brought to shore the dead body of a tiger.

We of course all went to inspect it at once, but the ladies could not get within fifty yards of it for the smell of the rotting carcase.

It was undoubtedly the tiger which had killed the unlucky native shikari, for its teeth and the roof of its mouth had been shot away and there was also a bullet wound in the body. From the state of preservation of the body, the beast must have lived for some three days after it had been shot, so we probably had had a narrow shave while we were looking for it. It must have been lying in, and died in, one of the nallas of the locality and had been washed down by the subsequent heavy rainfall.

The lady in the case, I heard afterwards, left the village to escape from the importunities of the surviving brother, with whom she would have nothing to do, stigmatizing him as a coward.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### BEAR HUNTING.

Except in the mountains, the only bear we have in India is the black "Sloth" bear. As this is the beast with whom I have had most to do, I will confine my remarks chiefly to this animal.

I have seen it written in books on sport that the Indian sloth bear is a suitable introduction for a young sportsman to dangerous game to get his "eye in"; from which it might be inferred that it is a comparatively insignificant and harmless beast. As to this I will first give a short sketch of the animal.

In his prime, a male sloth bear is nearly 7 feet in length, from his nose to his tail—I myself have shot them 6 feet 6 inches in length; add to this another couple of feet or more for his hind-legs, and his height will be that of a man 9 feet in height. So he is not such a very insignificant beast after all, is he? Nature has also endowed him with enormous power in his fore arms, in order to enable him to support the great weight of his body while swarming up trees whose

trunks are too large for his arms to encircle, having thus to support his body merely by the muscular clutch of his limbs on the broad convex surface. Their paws are armed with formidable curved claws some five inches in length, with which they strike lightning-like blows when attacking an enemy. There is a native saying, in reference to the strength of a bear's arm and paw, that a bear can drag two maunds (160 lbs.) for each one of its claws, that is,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. with each paw, or three-fourths of a ton with both paws. I myself have seen rocks that had been turned over by bears in their search for insects, that were fully five feet in diameter, which I doubt whether even ten men could have moved.

Their canine teeth are fearful weapons of offence, of which they make full use. One of the peculiarities of this bear is that when he attacks a man, he invariably makes a point of going for his face the first thing, if he gets half a chance of doing so, biting and clinging on to it like a bull-dog. A mauling from a bear is more to be dreaded than death itself, for the disfigurements usually caused in such cases are something frightful. Often have I seen among the jungle tribes, the relics only of what was once a human face, with nose, lips, eyebrows with the eye lids, and perhaps also the whole of one side of the face and scalp completely torn off in an instant by the lightning-like flash of a bear's paws, or bitten out by its teeth—leaving the stricken wretch a repulsively hideous object for the remainder of his life. Only a few months ago, I saw an European—a man still in Government service—who had been mauled by a bear in this manner.

A cantankerous old male, a female with cubs, or a wounded bear, are extremely dangerous beasts to tackle—for such will often charge on sight without any provocation. As to the manner in which bears will behave, it depends a great deal on the circumstances in which they are found, whether or not they have been previously hunted or fired at, or whether they have had it all their own way in attacking unarmed villagers in the jungles. However, at the best of times the temper of a bear is very uncertain, and it can never be depended on as to what he will or will not do.

About the only time a bear travels in a straight line is when he takes a short cut down a hill side by tumbling down like a stone, or

when he is charging. His usual manner of progression is in a zig-zag as he lumbers along, swaying from side to side as if he were changing his mind each time as to where to place his forefeet, so that owing to this dodging and uneven gait, he is frequently missed clean when fired at at a distance, for much the same reason as in snipe-shooting. Probably the position of his feet has a good deal to do with this clumsy shuffling gait, for his front feet are turned inwards, while his hind feet are turned outwards, being so made by nature.



Nevertheless, his pace is astonishing ; his gait uphill is an easy canter, just as if he were taking it easy on level ground. I once saw a drunken man on the top of a tram-car take a short cut to the ground by simply tumbling off the top like a sack of potatoes, and then pick himself up and lurch off with a grunt of satisfaction, as if he had discovered a new and easy way of descending from the top of tram-cars. This is exactly what bears do when they are in a hurry to get down a hill in a case of emergency, with the exception that the bear appears to roll himself into a ball and deliberately rolls down like a stone. I have seen this happen repeatedly.

A charging bear usually halts when it reaches within striking distance of its intended victim, in order to stand up on its hind legs while delivering its blow with those terrible paws. But it does not always do so, and when a bear uses the impetus of its charge to knock down its victim, the bullet having failed to stop it, it is usually all up with the man, for he might as well try to stand up to a railway engine as to a bear under such circumstances, when no dogs are at hand to help.

But fortunately, as already mentioned, a bear usually halts at the last moment, and by standing up on its hind legs, affords the sportsman an excellent opportunity of planting his bullet or spear into that fatal part of the bear's chest which is so conveniently marked off for us by Nature in the shape of a white V.

The sloth bear is a nocturnal animal, except in the rainy season, or occasionally on a cloudy day. As a rule, he starts out on his nightly peregrinations only at dusk, wandering over many miles of country, turning over large stones as he goes along to look for beetles, grubs and other insects which he greedily devours, and climbing trees after fruits, berries or honey. I have frequently seen rotten boughs of a tree which had obviously been broken down by the weight of a bear, and have occasionally shot bears whose bodies proved to be a mass of frightful bruises, apparently due to some such fall from a tree.

They are quite indifferent to the sting of a bee, if bees ever do sting them at all, which I doubt. It is an extraordinary fact that there is something in a bear's skin that appears to be very distasteful to insects, even after the skin has been tanned ; it will be noticed that dogs are very fond of lying on a bear skin in order, apparently, to get away from fleas. Again, various odours have their own peculiar effect on bees ; the scent of a man who is very dirty with stale perspiration and other natural smells, infuriates bees and make them attack at once, though they will not touch another man with him whose person is not similarly gifted. The fumes of tobacco cause them to move off, but does not seem to enrage them ; the scent of various herbs known to natives have a similar effect on them ; the scent of cooking butter or ghee also enrages them, and so on. Natives who are in the habit of taking bees, rub their bodies over with a secret preparation made from certain herbs, which

resembles oil, and then calmly swarm up to a hive, stark naked, except for a loin-cloth perhaps, and cut off the comb without being stung by a single bee.

Bears appear to have been endowed by Nature with a similar natural scent which seems to have the same effect on bees, as well as on other insects which are usually found on other wild animals, but very seldom on bears. Their long shaggy hair is certainly a great protection also, for the bees would only get entangled in it without reaching the body beyond, but this would not protect the bear's nose, eyes and paws.

In fact, there are few living things in the jungles which a bear has cause to be afraid of, except, perhaps, a tiger; but though I have known a tiger to kill and eat a bear, on the other hand, I have seen a bear stand up to a full-grown tigress and drive it right out of the jungle.

As a rule, bears return from their nightly wanderings by daybreak, though, in localities where they have not been much disturbed, they may sometimes be found on the move as late as 8 o'clock in the morning; in such cases they may be intercepted by the sportsman while on their way to their mid-day retreats. If such a retreat is not in caves, they will be found during the day lying asleep under some densely-matted bush, sometimes on a hillside, but more often right up on the top of a plateau, where they are very fond of lying, five and six bears in company, under the shade of the *chironji* or *achar* trees, the grass under such trees being generally marked by numerous "forms" made by the bears as they keep shifting their position round and round, as the sun moves round on to them.

In the Wurdah District, and in Mysore, I frequently found bears in this manner on the top of little flat-topped isolated hills, from whence they could be driven from one hill to another, across the level plain between them, thus affording an excellent opportunity of spearing them from horse-back. But horses have a great aversion to bears, unless specially trained to it. My little white pig-sticker, named "Budmash," which I had in Wurdah, I trained by having a tame bear kept in his company; he objected strongly at first, but the two soon became friends. Consequently, I was able to frequently indulge in bear-sticking, for a good horse can easily overtake a bear



on level ground. But they do not afford much sport in this manner, and are not to be compared with an old boar under similar circumstances.

*A propos* of spearing bears, I frequently had a fast and furious bit of fun in spearing them on foot in company with dogs, but not until after they had previously been otherwise wounded, except on one occasion. Many a wounded bear may be recovered in this manner with the help of a few good dogs.

In the year 1881, I was out bear-shooting with two old friends of mine, F. Naylor, the D. S. Police and Lieutenant Noble, in the Dhaga Sub-range, district Wurdah. One morning, before daylight, we three were seated on the rocks awaiting the return of the bears to their caves after their nightly peregrinations. The sun had risen well into the sky and nothing had come my way, so I got down from my perch and was wending my way back to camp, when I heard a shot in the direction where Naylor was posted. On reaching him, I found that three bears had come out by him, apparently two full-grown cubs and their mother. The latter, Naylor had wounded badly, and the three together had taken refuge among the gullies of a ravine which was filled with dense grass and brushwood; altogether a hairy place for following up, where we might at any moment be taken at a disadvantage on its precipitous sides. Naylor, ever a daring fellow, was for following them up at once, but acquiesced to my suggestion of sending for our dogs and spears, our camp being only a mile off. I had at this period a pack of about eight couple, mostly Polligar hounds, but also a few bull-terriers and terriers, and a spaniel or two.

These dogs, when they arrived, we put on to the blood-trail of the wounded bear, and away they went, while we with spears in our hands, followed as best we could. After a few hundred yards we heard the *wouf! wouf!* of the bear, which the dogs had bailed up. On reaching the spot, we found her sitting on her hams, looking pitifully helpless, with the dogs baying at her on all sides. But on seeing us, her stupid look of helplessness changed to one of ferocious vindictiveness, as she came down on all fours and charged us. But the moment she turned her back to the dogs, who also saw us, they at once rushed in and laid hold of her wherever they could find room, and, handicapped as she was in this manner and from the loss of

blood, Naylor and I had not much difficulty in finishing her off between us with our spears.

We then cast about for the scent of the other two bears ; they had been seen to enter together another gully, so putting the dogs on to their scent, we were away again. A look-out man on the top of the cliff cried out that the bears had broken cover on to the " maidan " or open level ground above.

Scrambling out of the ravine we saw to our right front, one of the bears hastily climbing a large tree, while to the left, on the ground, lay the second bear on his back with a bull-terrier hanging on like grim death to his nose, while the other dogs pinned him down. In this position he lay helplessly and howled, until we put him out of pain with our spears. In the meanwhile, some of the dogs were bay-ing the other bear, keeping him securely in the refuge he had taken until our arrival. On seeing us, however, he scrambled down and made off, but being pressed hard by the dogs, he again got up another tree, a larger one than the first, and here he stuck. We were busy stoning him and bidding him to come down and be killed, when he complied with our request rather more suddenly than we expected, for literally dropping from a height of about thirty feet, he landed in some extraordinary manner on all fours, and immediately gave chase to a flying native, but was intercepted by a side thrust from Naylor's spear. He turned round on Naylor, but was again interfered with by my spear on the other side, and between us we soon had number three also laid out. Altogether it was an extremely exciting though dangerous bit of sport, much to poor Noble's disgust for not having taken part in it, though from his solitary perch, he had shot one bear and had seen no less than eleven others in the distance.

We had a similar bit of fun with our dogs, on another occasion I remember, but many years before this. It was in my griffin days, in the year 1866, in the Dalacari forests on the Satpura range, district Hoshungabad. At this time I was Forest Officer in charge of the sleeper-works for the G. I. P. Railway, which was then under construction. With me was also a young Engineer by the name of Ship. One evening while returning through the forests from our work, Ship and I separated in order to see if we could pick up something for the pot on our way back. We had scarcely parted ten

minutes, when I spotted a bear and two cubs busily engaged in turning over stones in the search of insects. The old lady, however, got my wind and giving the warning to her infants, the latter scrambled hastily on to her back and away went the trio, shuffling along, until a bullet spat on the ground beneath them, when the shuffle turned into a lumbering gallop. But the contents of my second barrel caught the old lady somewhere amidship, making her peck violently, but the little riders held on with a wonderful tenacity and were not pipped.

Recovering herself she went on again and, before I could re-load, entered a dense patch of grass. On hearing my shots, and the grunts and squeals of the bear, Ship, who was on the other side of the grass patch entered by the bear, came running towards me asking what was the matter ; and it was with some difficulty that I succeeded in warning him that a wounded bear lay between him and me. It was now too late and dark to do anything, so we returned to camp.

Next morning we returned with our dogs, bringing with us our spears ; the dogs soon found the bear, which, in its wounded state, had not gone far ; she had lost a considerable amount of blood, but nevertheless put up a very tolerable fight, and it was only after an intensely exciting scrimmage that Ship and I at last succeeded in despatching her. The cubs in the meanwhile climbed into some trees but were shaken from their perches and secured alive by the natives whom it was amusing to see chasing the fleeing little brutes with blankets in their hands.

Only on one occasion have I speared and killed a full-grown unwounded male bear. This also occurred in the Hoshungabad district. It was on the occasion of a visit of some exalted officials, for whom I was selected to play the part of head game-keeper, as well as arming some of the members of their party with my own weapons, so that I had to content myself with only a spear, for I was the most junior official present. In keeping with the position allotted to me after having posted up the big-guns, I went round to bring up the beaters—the beat being a scratch one for anything that might turn up, which might include a tiger, and most certainly bears, of whom I knew there were several in this area.





A FULL-GROWN UNWOUNDED MALE BEAR

Having placed myself in the centre of the line, I gave the signal to advance. We had proceeded perhaps half way, when suddenly to my right there was an ursine *wouf! wouf!* followed by the shrill cries of a human voice. I immediately dashed round to the spot to the rescue, and saw the form of a huge male bear standing over the form of a boy, growling at him. On seeing me, the brute at once stood up on his hind-legs, and in the meanwhile the boy scuttled off out of the way. Without waiting to think—indeed, I had no alternative—I plunged the spear into the bear's breast, and then darted off to one side, dragging out the spear after me. At the moment I scarcely knew what had happened, for it all had taken place so quickly, and in an instant. I was back into the friendly cover of the dense grass around us, in which I kept still as a mouse, scarcely daring to breathe. After a few moments of intense suspense, a sound like a long drawn gasp reached my ears; a sweet sound to me, for I knew then that my thrust had been fatal—so crawling cautiously round to a better position, I climbed up into a tree, and from thence saw the bear lying in a heap on the ground with his face doubled up under him. I was anxious not to lose him, and as his present position rendered an approach fairly safe, I got down and quietly crept up to him, and gave him another dig with my spear. But the beast was quite dead—my first thrust having pierced his heart; had it not done so, I have little doubt but that bear would have made mincemeat of me, for I had no dogs to help me this time. Even with dogs, it is very risky work tackling an unwounded bear on foot with only a spear.

There appears to be an idea among some sportsmen that bears cannot be beaten for. They certainly cannot be beaten if you try to drive them *down* hill, when you would probably also get some of the beaters killed or badly scragged. Remember that a bear will invariably bolt *up* hill when he is driven. If the cover is thick, he is sometimes difficult to move, probably hoping to hide and be passed over, for which reason it is usually necessary to make a considerable noise, sometimes even necessitating the use of fire-works. But such an excess of noise should not be resorted to, unless the circumstances make it absolutely necessary and the bears are not likely to come out without, for too much noise frightens them, and

once they are on the run, nothing on earth in the shape of a "stop" will stop them, and they will race clean over any man that tries to turn them, probably giving him some nasty scratches at least in doing so.

However, I think I may say without exaggeration, that I have beaten out and shot hundreds of bears in my time, for most of the districts in which I have been posted have literally swarmed with them in places, specially Wurdah, Chanda and parts of Mysore. On one occasion, in Wurdah, I saw no less than 17 bears in one morning.

Another way of getting bears is by starting out at 3 o'clock in the morning and sitting up over their runs, intercepting them on their way home from their peregrinations down on the *maidans* below. On one occasion, while stationed in the Bangalore District, I was seated up on some rocks in this manner, when two old bears commenced climbing up a water-course below me. On firing at the leading beast and wounding him, he at once turned round and attacked his companion with the utmost fury, apparently thinking that it was he who had done him the injury, and during the scrimmage I was able to shoot the other one also. However, one of the beasts rolled over the cliff and fell right into the middle of an enormous bambu clump, where he remained lodged in the centre, stone dead ; as it would have taken us at least a couple of days to cut him out from such a place, by which time he would have been bad, we had to leave him.

On my return to camp on this occasion, I found that my elephant had gone *musth* and was running amok among my tents. He ran at me as I stood in the door of the tent, but, as I had a spear in my hand, I placed the butt against my foot and let him run on to the point. He did not appear to like this, for he stopped and then left my camp and went off into the jungles. Shortly afterwards on the same day an elephant-battery arrived on their way from Coonoor, and pitched their camp near mine. So I offered their *mahauts* a reward to catch my elephant and give him a good drubbing. As this battery and their C. O., Colonel Pearse, were known to me, a party of us went out again next morning to sit for bears, the guns being placed at intervals along the rocks. I think we got four bears that morning. On returning to camp, I found my truant elephant firmly secured between two of the battery elephants, who were giving him a sound thrashing with chains. I had to be very careful with this beast for

some time, and always stood by with a spear in my hand when he was being fed ; it was as well that I did so, for one evening he suddenly made a grab at his keeper and took his arm into his mouth, but the next moment I jabbed my spear into the under part of his trunk, and by thus prising it up, I forced him to let the man go. This gave us a lot of extra trouble, for with the spear-wound in his trunk, the beast was unable to drink ; so we had to pour water down his throat through the hollow of a plantain stem, and finally pulled him through. After this I had no more trouble with the beast. Though a bit uncertain in temper at times, this elephant was a splendid beast. My boss had handed him over to me with a wish of "luck", for the elephant had treated him lately in rather an undignified fashion, by giving him a lifting kick that sent the worthy gentleman flying through the air, landing in a thorn bush on all fours—frog fashion—but without doing him much harm other than that of a considerable shock. No wonder he wished me "luck"!

A considerable amount of judgment is necessary in beating for bears in regard to the direction of the beat and the post for the gun, which questions should be very carefully thought out beforehand, for stops are not of much use on such occasions—especially in the hills.

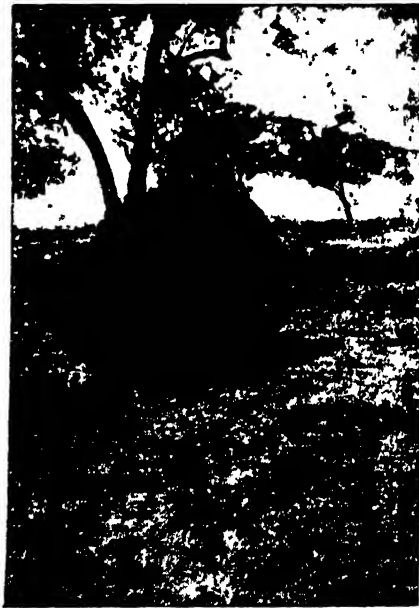
However, from the little I have seen of the Himalayan bears, they seem to be much easier to get on the move than the sloth bear. I was shooting lately in Teri, in company with Mr. A. G. Shuttleworth, of the Opium Department, when we came on the tracks of a large black bear which led into a thicket on the face of an almost impossible place. However, we took up our positions above the place where we thought he was, and sent men round and below to do the best they could in the way of driving the bear up to us. But we had miscalculated, for the bear was not where we thought he was, but on the further side of the ravine opposite us ; so while the men were going round, they put the bear out. We saw the beast when he was about 200 yards off, going along at a marvellous pace along the face of a frightful *khud* ; however, as he was right out in the open, we opened fire at him and sent him rolling down the hill side badly hit. My younger companion was off after him



at once, and finished him. I had no wish to be caught out in those awful hills by darkness, so while S. remained to skin his bear, I returned home. S. did not turn up till 12 o'clock at night; I did not envy him his walk back.

There are very few bears in the Doon Valley, which is manifested by the manner in which bees build their combs here, sometimes on branches that are touching the ground, which is a great nuisance when one is in the habit of using dogs as I am.

His powers of sight being comparatively inferior, a bear depends entirely on his powers of scent and hearing, both of which are abnormally keen. For this reason a bear may most easily be



EATING THE FRUIT OF THE IER TREE.

approached when he is in the act of digging for roots or insects, for then with the noise he makes in digging, coupled with the fact that his nose is filled with the scent of the damp earth or with that of the object for which he is hunting, he is not in a position to use these powers. He may frequently be come upon in this manner on a rainy or cloudy day, on which occasions they often wander about all day long.

Another peculiar habit that bears have is that of sucking up white-ants through their nostrils. They place their nose against the

aperture in the ground which contains the succulent ants, and then draw tremendous long breaths, the sound of which can be heard for hundreds of yards, thus drawing up the little white morsels by mere suction power.

Thus it will be readily understood that a bear cannot smell much else when thus engaged. I have frequently walked up to within a few feet of a bear occupied in this manner, without being detected. They usually first dig down a portion of the way into the ground before using their nose in the way described; it is comical to watch their behaviour on such occasions—at times half buried in a hole in the earth with only their black hinder part sticking out, backing out every now and again to take a guilty squint round, and then in at it again. I once took a fellow-sportsman up to within ten feet of a half buried bear, but as he insisted on using an explosive ball, he did not get the bear even then.

In the month of April, when the fleshy yellowish-white Mhowa flower lies in heaps fermenting on the ground, bears as well as other animals become partially intoxicated by eating them, and then sometimes behave in the most erratic manner, much the same as a drunken man. The Mhowa flower only requires to be fermented for twelve hours to be made into a most intoxicating liquor, and is used as such by the natives. But really I must put on the brake to this chapter, for when on the subject of bears I could go on for a week.

## CHAPTER XXII.

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### THREE TIGERS KILLED ON FOOT IN ONE MINUTE.

On my return to India in the year 1887, from the only trip I have had in forty years to the place of my birth in the "Old Countree," I found orders awaiting me to proceed at once, in the height of the rainy season, to the Bilaspur District, which entailed a journey of 344 miles (taken from my diary) across a country with no railways or roads and through some of the densest forests of India. On arrival, I was ordered to proceed to the Laurimi Range, where I was told I must build myself a house, as for some reason no tents were available for me.

I sent in an estimate to Government for the enormous sum of Rs. 200 (a little over £13 sterling) for the building of the house for myself and family, and the reply I received was: "What! did I want to build a Palace?"

However, I built a shanty of wattle and dab on piles, much on the style of those built by natives in Burmah, right out in the wilds, the only inhabitants being a few wild aboriginal tribes known as Bigers.

It was in this lovely place that our lot was cast for months at a time. To all intents and purposes we might have been in the Back Bush of Australia, except for the fact that our forests in India always have plenty of birds to make the place cheerful, and not the deathly stillness with which, I know from personal experience, the Australian Bush is cursed.

A note of warning here to Anglo-Indians who may be misled by some of the accounts and advertisements regarding Australia as a place for Anglo-Indians to settle in.

Having had a bad accident at pig-sticking in the Wurdah District, I was ordered to go on furlough, so I visited Australia and took a farm in the Back Bush, to see what the country was like, with a view to settling there when I retired.

The whole thing in a nut-shell is, that Anglo-Indians, unless they have considerable private means of their own, are usually unfitted for life in any other country but India.





CAMPING IN COMFORT

In Australia, for instance, the luxury of a servant is almost prohibitive to a man who has only a pension to live on, and if he secures one, he has to treat him or her as an equal.

The probability is that an Anglo-Indian in the Back Blocks would have no servant at all, for love or money, when he would have to do everything himself, from scrubbing the floor, cutting and bringing in his own fire-wood, cooking his own meals, etc., etc.

Again, the sanitary arrangements in out of town farms are almost unspeakable, consisting generally of simply a hole in the ground, which is never cleaned, and the stench is something awful.

We were there only one season and had no drought, but our neighbours, who had lately passed through a drought, told us that their whole family had to bathe in *one* tub of water, and that only once a month, after which the clothes of the whole establishment were washed in the same water. There was probably great competition for the first turn at that bath.

Before leaving I was offered a post as Forest Officer by the Australian Government. The salary was good enough, but on my enquiring as to what tentage, carriage and staff I would be given, I was told that I would be given one small bell-tent and a horse, and that I would have no staff, but would have to strike and pitch my camps myself!

Dear, dear me! I pictured myself in my old surroundings after a comfortable dinner, in an arm-chair with a cheroot, with the familiar *click, click, click* of the tent pegs being struck by a small army of some 25 to 30 men, busily engaged in striking my camp—a peaceful and soothing though busy scene in the moonlight, contrasted with myself alone in the stillness of a gloomy Australian forest, with a bell-tent, one horse and a billy-can!

No, I found by personal experience that the accounts of Australia as a place for Anglo-Indians to settle in, were a delusion.

To return to Laurimi. Of course the only pastime we had here was shooting, of which we had plenty.

One day in the hot weather, when everything was parched and dry, a Biger came in and reported that while he was fishing in the few remaining pools of a river, he came on a tiger lying in the water.

His fishing by the way consisted of simply stirring up the mud in these small pools to such an extent, that the little fishes in them floated up choked to death, when he collected them with a cloth as dirty as the water.

My shikari said that he knew the place, so off we started, but found no tiger.

The heat was terrific, so that we soon exhausted the water we had brought with us, and the water here was in such a putrid state that we could not bring ourselves to drink it.

My shikari, however, said he knew of better water at a place called Surhi, about two miles off, and, as that was our nearest hope, off we started for Surhi.

On reaching the place, just as I was riding down the banks of the nalla on my horse, I heard the rush of some animals out of the water below me.

I immediately jumped off and seized my rifle, and on examining the cause found, by the footprints in the sand, that we had disturbed a family of large tigers who had apparently been lying in the water, for drops of water were still falling from the grass at the spot where they had passed.

Their tracks showed that they had entered a patch of grass on the false or lower bank of the nalla, so I at once gave a few rapid instructions to the few men I had with me to beat up the grass towards me, while I ran round with one man, in case I needed a stop, and intercepted the tigers on ahead, taking up my position in the centre of the grass at a part where it narrowed, where, though the grass was somewhat high, nothing could pass by without my knowing it.

Almost in front of me, however, there was an awkward dry tree-trunk which had fallen and completely bridged the nalla from side to side, so I placed my man behind it to act as a stop, for fear the tigers might slip out behind it unseen by me ; he was, however, so frozen with terror that he never moved a muscle throughout the whole proceedings, which luckily was not needed.

After about half a minute I heard the grass moving, near the base of the fallen tree, scarcely ten yards away, whence appeared the head of a tiger, whom I promptly knocked over with a shot in the neck.







I had just finished re-loading the empty barrel, when I heard a rush behind me, and saw a tiger bound across the bed of the nalla and stand for a moment under a bambu clump about sixty yards away. That pause was fatal, for the next moment my bullet struck it in its shoulder and rolled it over on the sloping bank, where it remained howling, apparently paralyzed

My shot, however, was greeted with another roar in the direction of the tree, and I whipped round in time to see a magnificent male tiger spring on to the log and start using it as a bridge. I had no time now to re-load my empty barrel, so I gave him the remaining barrel behind his shoulder, and saw him topple over on the further side of the log, just when a fourth tiger sprang into the bed of the dry nalla and disappeared round the corner of another side stream before I could succeed in my frantic efforts to get another cartridge into my gun in time for him.

However, I had three tigers on the ground and was lucky enough to find them all three stone dead, so I could not complain.

It may be, that some will be inclined to think that the above incident is rather far-fetched. As a means of corroboration has lately come to hand, in the shape of a letter from Mr. W. J. Considine, a C.P. sportsman, I am taking the liberty, with the consent of the sender, of quoting a portion of it here, which is as follows :—

BILASPORE, C.P.

*March 31st, 1906.*

DEAR MR. HICKS,

Somewhere about the first week in March I saw your full-paged advertisement regarding your book "Forty Years Among the Wild Animals of India." At the time I was at Kantli, in the Laurimi Range, having a shoot, and I asked some of the old fellows if they remembered you, and Nanga Baiga of Laurimi said : " Oh ! yes, I was with the Sahib when he shot three tigers in three shots at Surhi." Pakla Roat who looks after the " Dhyan " round about Kantli, said he was also there ; so I presume that this was the three tigers with three shots in one minute incident. \* \* \*

Yours truly,  
W. J. CONSIDINE.



GIOTA HAZRI IN CAMI

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A TIGRESS AND CUBS IN A SUGAR-CANE FIELD.

The following incident is given in order to show what extraordinary and unexpected places a tigress will sometimes resort to in order to have cubs, and the difference the temporary absence of a shooting ladder may make.

It was at our second camp out from Mandla, on our winter tour of 1889, as far as I can recollect somewhere in the neighbourhood of the village of Indri, towards the southern portion of the district, where the country was quite open for many miles around, except for a few small leads of scrubs here and there which were the only possible links connecting the locality with the heavy jungles that lay some five or six miles further south.

As all Anglo-Indians know, the preliminary move from Headquarters is always the most difficult and most dreaded. But on this occasion our baggage had the extra difficulty of negotiating the river Nerbudda which runs close by the station of Mundla, having to be transhipped from the camels on to boats, while the camels themselves had to go some ten miles up the river and cross at the ford at Ramnagar.

At such times, invariably something of importance is forgotten and left behind; and on this occasion it was my shooting ladder. But as a new one could soon be made as soon as we reached the big jungles where suitable bambus could be obtained for the purpose, we did not trouble to send back for the old ladder, for we presumed that we would not require one until those jungles were reached. But herein was our mistake.

Except some domestic cattle and a few antelope, there were no other large four-footed animals for miles around our second camp, so it was the last place one would have expected to find a tiger, nor did we think of making any enquiries for them. Nevertheless, one of my orderlies accidentally overheard some village children talking among themselves, to the effect that a tiger had killed a village cow on the evening previous—hearing which, my orderly bribed the children to take him to the place where they said the event had taken place. Here, sure enough, he found the fresh foot-prints of a large tigress in the sand of the river-bed, on the banks of which there was a field of dense sugar-cane. The tigress had killed the cow at a pool of water close by, and had dragged it into an adjoining sugar-cane field.

This discovery was not made until we were on the point of making an early morning march to another camp, the greater portion of our camp having been already sent on. Nor could I bring myself to believe the news until I had gone down personally and saw the foot-prints myself.

I then at once guessed that the old girl had cubs with her, and on taxing the villagers, they admitted that my surmise was correct, and said that they had concealed the presence of the tigress from me, because they were afraid I might insist on them beating the sugar-cane, which of course under the circumstances would have meant certain death for a number of the beaters.

To send men into that dense cane was simply out of the question. So the question was how could we force the tigress to show herself within the limited time at my disposal. It seemed impossible, but I determined to have a try.

Abutting on to one end of the sugar-cane field was a small but excessively dense bit of grass, matted over with thorns, and the only

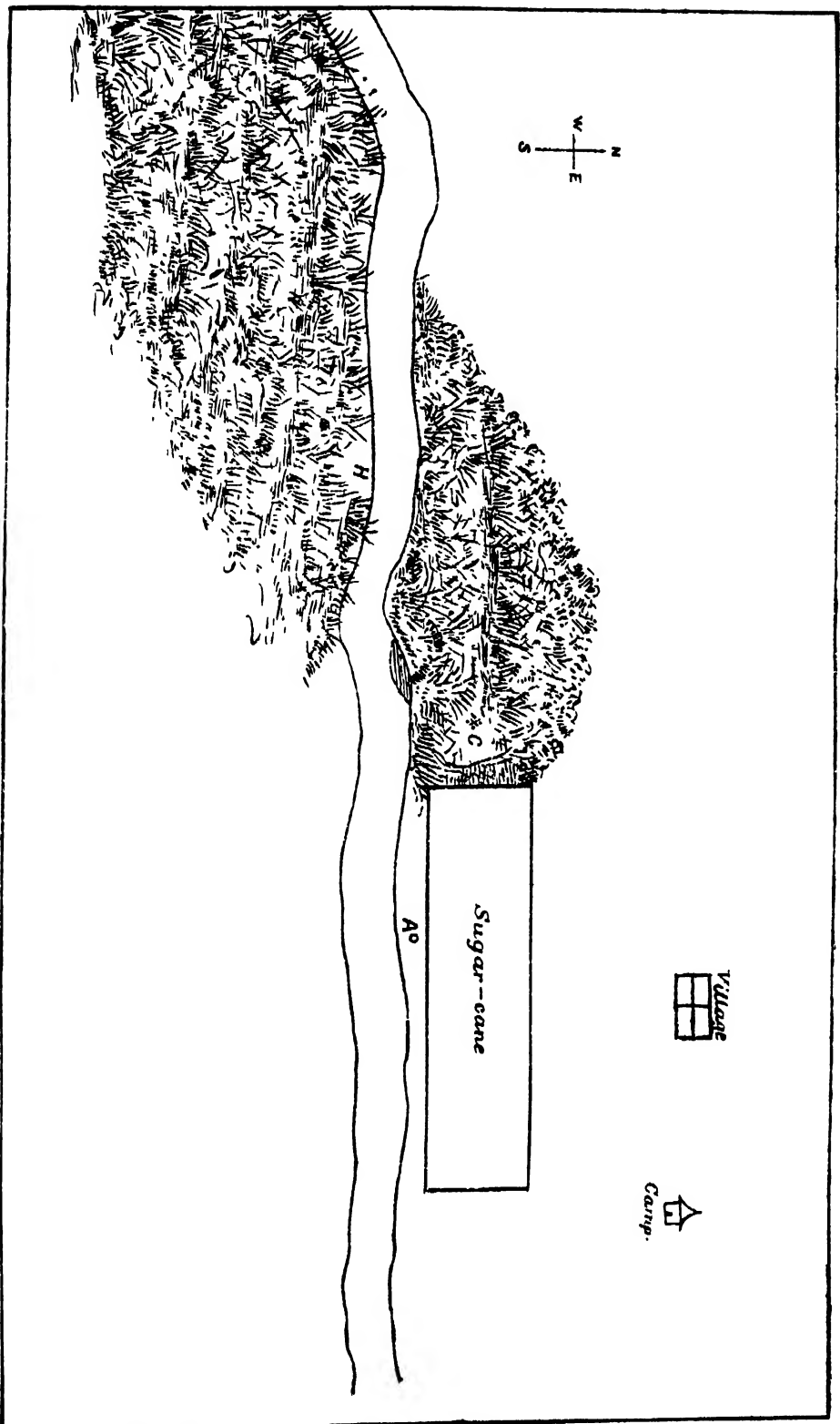
tree about here (except a small sapling about eight feet high that grew near the cane on the bank (A) of the river) was an enormous old silk-cotton tree (C) which grew in an ideal position within this patch of grass. But—and a very big BUT—the blessed thing was some ten feet in diameter and without a single branch within some forty or fifty feet of the ground, so that to climb it on the spur of the moment, such as this, was impossible. Had I had a ladder, I could have placed it against this tree, and would have bagged the tigress. But I had no ladder, nor could I sit on the ground in this grass, for it was so dense that I would have been unable to see the muzzle of my gun.

So the only thing was for me to sit on the further bank of the river (at H) where there was a small lead of scrub, for which the tigress might possibly make a dash, though this was a forlorn—if not foolish—hope, for it entailed the crossing by her cubs of the open bed of the river which intervened.

As I mentioned before, there was no question about the impossibility of sending men into that cane to drive out a tigress that had cubs. But fortunately my stock of fire-works and rockets, which I always carry about with me in a tiger country, had not been sent on to my next camp, so that with these, and the help of all the local villagers, drums, etc., I hoped to be able to frighten the tigress out of the cane across the river.

Arrangements were then made accordingly. The men were ranged along the northern and eastern side of the cane, with orders to make all the noise they could, while my own men threw in fire-works and rockets. While a man of light weight was also placed on the sapling (A) which overlooked the sugar-cane field, with instructions to signal the movements of the tigress whenever he caught sight of her. Each man was supplied with a store of stones, so that a continual hail was rained in on to the field of cane, but strict orders were given that no man was, on any account, to venture within.

This pandemonium was maintained for about two hours without the tigress giving any signs. At last the man on the sapling made violent signals to me to come to him; and on my doing so, he informed me that there was a gap in the cane, through which he



CUBS IN SUGAR-CANE.



repeatedly saw the tigress pass and repass. So I made him descend and I took his place. But my extra weight so bent down the sapling, that I was scarcely more than three feet or so higher than I would have been had I been standing on the ground. So I had to give it up, and retire again to my position across the river.

After a time the man on the sapling called out that the tigress had left the cane, and had entered the adjoining grass patch. Hearing this, some of my own men, for I had given no definite orders to them regarding this grass, immediately ran round and rashly entered this grass with the object of cutting off the retreat of the tigress to the cane.

Had they not done this, I would have been able to fire at the tigress, who appeared several times on the further bank of the river at a distance of about eighty yards. But as the men were in the grass, I dared not fire at her at this distance for fear of only wounding her, in which case some of the men would certainly have been killed. So I waited in hopes she might break across the river.

It was a vain hope, and my heart sank into my boots when I heard the tigress suddenly roar, followed by a lot of shouting on the part of the men. She had broken back over them to the cane—fortunately without doing anybody any damage, as I learnt afterwards.

We bullied her in this manner till sundown, when we were obliged to give her up. It had been a blunder all through, for I might have known from the beginning that she would never on any account desert her cubs—while it was very unlikely that her cubs, who were only about three months old, would come out into the open in broad daylight.

I had a buff tied by the water for her in the evening, on the chance of her killing it and staying—for I made up my mind to return on the following day to have another try.

But the bucketing she had was too much for her. In the morning we found her tracks, and the tracks of her three cubs, leading out of the cane and across the river, into the scrub on the further side, from whence she and her cubs travelled straight on to the big jungles some six miles away, though we soon lost all traces of them on the hard ground.



What an aggravating thing "after-wit" is? Why had I not thought of getting an ordinary country-cart and loading it up to a height ten or twelve feet with grass, from which perch, when pushed into the centre of the grass, I could have shot the tigress dead with the greatest of ease, and would have then secured her cubs. How unfortunate that such bright ideas occur generally only when it is too late.

Or had I recalled my camp and a ladder, and done things deliberately and systematically, instead of trying to hurry over such a difficult matter, I would probably have succeeded. This was indeed a case of "the more haste the less speed."



EVENING IN CAMP MR. & MRS. F. HICKS

In the centre of this sugar-cane field were the remains of a sugar-press and vat, which had been used by the tigress as an appropriate place in which to have her cubs. For three months past, she had preyed entirely on the village cattle; but though in this manner she had already done a great deal of damage, the villagers were afraid to appeal to Europeans for assistance—which is hardly a compliment to the common-sense of Europeans. I learnt that a local Brahman had promised to rid them of the tigress for a consideration—but had failed to do so until my arrival. No doubt he took the credit of my having come there.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

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### RENUNCIATION TO THE LITTLE TIN GOD.

In the Wurdah District in the year 1881, I and my two chums, Naylor, the D. S. Police and Lieutenant Noble, all three young and enthusiastic, keen on every form of sport from snipe, pig-sticking to tiger-shooting, were planning to have a grand time in the hot weather season after some tigers which we had marked down in certain parts of the District, which was also to include some pig-sticking.

With a bit of coaxing I had managed to induce a family of four tigers to take up their quarters in a certain *birre* or forest grass-farm, not far from head-quarters.

There was no natural water-supply in this place, but it had an old deserted garden which contained a dry water-cistern ; this I caused to be refilled with water once or twice a week, with the result that it soon attracted wild animals, and the tigers followed them.

We were looking forward to having a good bit of fun with this little lot, when the " Little Tin God " apparently having heard of our plans, put a damper to our hopes by intimating to us that he desired us to show him some really good sport in tiger-shooting.

However, we made the best of it, for when we undertook to do a thing we did our best, and generally in style, so we determined to take him to the *birre*.

We were anxious to start operations early in April, when it is not so hot as it is later on, and also at this time the trees are mostly bare, not having yet recovered their summer foliage, thus limiting the cover and the chance of the tigers wandering.

But his honour, whom we will denote as L., put off coming out time after time, until at last we got exasperated and determined to wait no longer, but go and have our fling ourselves.

Hearing of this, L. at once blundered out and joined us, forgetting to bring even his rifle, so that I had to lend him mine.

On the morning of his arrival, a kill was reported, so off we started, taking our tiffin baskets and beaters with us, for we meant to make a day of it.

We had to walk there, so by the time we had to halt the beaters, L. was only too pleased to stay behind to look after them, while we three younger men went to inspect the kill.

We were proceeding silently in the direction where we could see the vultures circling in the air, when suddenly we almost stumbled right on top of all the four tigers, who were having a siesta in the grass.

Noble thoughtlessly went at once on to his knee and covered one of the tigers with his rifle, as we all would have done on any other occasion, but I stopped him in time to remind him of our self-invited guest, who was awaiting us, but for which I have no doubt that between the three of us we would have bagged all four tigers on the spot before they could have got away.

We were afraid that the tigers might now get on the move, so we hurried back and put L. up into his tree, and while Naylor and Noble each put up one of the wings of the stops, I hurried round with the beaters and ringed the tigers in, between them and the stops. I meant the beat to be more or less a silent one, with a view to having a second beat in the neighbourhood in case the tigers had slipped out of our circle.

I was relieved, however, when after a time I heard a regular fusillade of shots in the direction of the guns.

But I would not allow the beat to stop, but pushed on, as I knew there were four tigers in the beat.

It was rather risky doing so, though I was present with the beaters to help them if we came across a wounded tiger.

On reaching the guns, I found to my disgust that only one of the tigers had been fired at, the other shots being at bears, in consequence of which the remaining tigers had broken through the line of stops and escaped.

I am afraid I expressed my opinion freely on the conduct of my friends in firing at wretched old bears when they had a splendid chance of bagging four tigers in one beat, which they would probably have done had they refrained from firing at the bears.

However, it was no use crying over spilt milk, so we proceeded to hunt up the wounded, which they told me consisted of two bears and one tiger, the latter wounded by L.





The two bears we found dead further on, but the tiger, though there was plenty of blood, we could not find, so we returned to camp with the intention of returning to hunt him up next morning with buffs.

In the morning, however, just as we were about to start, a man came running in to say that while a party of natives were travelling along in a bullock-cart, their bullocks shied at something on the side of the road, and on looking to see the cause, they found a tiger lying dead on the spot, so he had come in to report the news.

On proceeding to the place, we found the news true enough, for there was a large male tiger lying dead, two miles from the place where L. had shot it.

It was a great bit of luck finding this animal, for had he fallen in the jungles after the blood had stopped flowing, we would probably never have found him. This is undoubtedly the way in which a number of unretrieved wounded animals go off and die.

After this L. left us, but the remaining three of us stayed on, and a few days later succeeded in bagging two more of the three tigers that remained of this batch.

Noble then also left us to return to duty. On the evening before he left, an accident occurred which in a manner predicted the poor fellow's death shortly afterwards. We were all seated at dinner when we heard a shot in Noble's tent, and on going to see the cause of it, found that his servant had been playing with his rifle, having loaded it, when it went off accidentally and nearly killed another servant near by and had set the tent on fire.

The servant was duly chastised for his carelessness, but the lesson unfortunately was not sufficient for his master, who later accidentally shot himself in his foot, from the effects of which he died.

In the meanwhile, Naylor and I continued our trip and finished up with a good bit of fun, the details of which I have given elsewhere.

I was sorry when the time came for us to part, for two more genial and good-hearted companions never existed, both of them alas! to be cut off in their prime by a cruel fate.

## CHAPTER XXV.

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### DOGS FOR DANGEROUS GAME.

When in Rome do as the Romans do : so let us first consider the ways of the indigenous or wild dog of India, aptly called by the inhabitants of the country the "Sone Kutta" or the gold colour dog, on account of its fur being of a yellowish red colour. Long in the body and wolfish in appearance, to the animals of the forests they are the untiring Fates, from whom there is no escape. They hunt entirely by scent, and do not appear to be very fleet ; indeed, when the quarry is not in sight they seem to take things very easy, keeping well together, their noses to the ground, and maintain a kind of whimper as they go. They hunt entirely by day and not at night, a fact which does not appear to be always kept in mind by sportsmen.

They may occasionally be seen hunting in pairs, but more often in packs, sometimes as many as forty together ; indeed, I myself on two occasions have seen fully this number hunting conjointly.

When in numbers they are fearless and do not hesitate to attack and drive a tiger off his kill, while the natives affirm that they sometimes even succeed in killing him.

When once on the scent of their quarry they keep on untiringly until they exhaust him, and nothing can save him except he crosses a deep and crocodile-infested river ; this the wild dog will not traverse, in which they show more sense than their domesticated brethren. Most forest rivers in India, especially those in the Central Provinces, are infested by small species of crocodile, rarely more than three feet in length, too small to tackle a large deer, but quite large enough to pull down a dog.

From the above brief survey of some of the characteristics of the wild dog in India, we find that Nature has developed in them the following qualities as being most essential to the circumstances in which they are placed : namely, a persevering endurance rather than speed, scent rather than sight, exercise of courage only when in numbers, and a keen instinct regarding the natural dangers of their surroundings. The latter quality in English dogs in India is

naturally often partially absent, though they usually recognise danger when they come on the scent of any of the larger feline tribe.

But all the other qualities, and more, are to be had in good English dogs of the right species.

What I wish to bring home to my readers is, that in hunting big game in India, these qualities, among others, are absolutely necessary in the dogs they use for that purpose.

The above remarks, of course, apply chiefly to hunting in thick cover, but before going further we will classify the different kinds of hunting with which we propose dealing. They may be divided into the following classes :—

(I)—Dangerous Game.

A pack of large-sized Bull-terriers with a few Harriers are recommended.

(II)—Deer and Antelope.

A pack chiefly of Harriers, a few Greyhounds and other dogs to choice.

(III)—Small Game (Birds, Hares, etc.)—Best bred Spaniels.

(IV)—Miscellaneous (Foxes, Jackals, etc.)—Pure bred Harriers.

A pure bred Bull-dog is too fearless for this purpose: for as a rule, he attacks without delay, and gets killed before his master arrives on the scene to help him. When at Bangalore (Mysore States) in the year 1874, I bought a pure bred Bull-dog warranted to kill almost anything. He certainly lived up to his reputation, and did his best to make a beginning on me and my servants. I was expecting the beast, and on my return from office one day, I was told that the dog had arrived, and had been tied up in my bathroom; hearing this I hastened to inspect my new acquisition, little knowing what a savage temper he was in or that he had slipped his collar since being tied up.

The moment I opened the door, the dog rushed out and gave chase to a servant, who had followed me, but who was now fleeing for his life. The dog, however, soon overtook him and caught him by—well, what shall we say—“his seat of honour!” but fortunately natives wear several folds of cloth on this part, and it was this which the dog seized; the folds of cloth came untucked and fell over the dog's head, thus enabling the native to make good his escape, but minus the most essential part of his garments.



The dog next came for me, but I was prepared, having snatched a walking stick heavily loaded at one end, and with this I laid him out and secured him.

A further acquaintance with him, however, proved that the dog was not really savage so far as human beings were concerned, and had only acted as he did in a panic at suddenly finding himself among strangers in a strange place, but he nevertheless hugely relished chasing a man up a tree, though he would do nothing to him if he stood still.

He was not long, however, in getting me into trouble, for he was an incorrigible murderer of all domestic animals. Two of my dogs, several goats and sheep, a pony, a regimental donkey, and finally a "Sacred Bull" were among his victims, so I thought it was high time to take my champion into camp for a change of air, and see what he would do with big game.

The first blood-trail I put him on to was that of a cheetle stag which I had wounded. The dog went off without hesitation and I and my men followed as best we could ; but after a time the blood-trail stopped, so having nothing further to go on, we were obliged to give up the chase and as night was approaching we returned to camp, leaving the perverse beast to find his way back as best he could ; though I secretly hoped he never would, for I was always in dread that he might some day kill one of my favourite dogs. Indeed, there seemed little chance of his returning, as the place swarmed with panthers and pantherets, so I was a bit surprised next morning to see a forlorn-looking spectacle turn up, torn and bleeding from head to tail ; it was very evident that he had had a right royal turn up with a panther or pantheret, and his presence showed that he had got the better of him too—may be had killed him, unless he escaped by getting up a tree, for I am convinced the dog would otherwise have fought on until either one or the other were killed.

However, I doctored the pitiful object, and in a few days' time he was as right as ever and 'spailin' for another fight. In this I was able to gratify him.

I had received information that a cow had been killed near my camp by panthers, but on reaching the spot I found that the villagers had removed the carcass, so I had a goat tied out and sat up over it.

I did not expect the panthers early as they were said to have fed heavily on the cow the night before. So I was taking matters easy ; in fact I was reading up some notes on Canarese as I had shortly to go up for an examination in that subject, when suddenly there was a rush under my tree, and the next thing I saw was a large panther lying on its back, with the goat in its four paws, kicking it up in the air, exactly in the same manner as we often see a cat doing to a ball of wool. I was so taken up in watching these antics that I did not at first notice that there was a second spectator to the scene, namely, another panther, a female, the one on the ground being a male. The latter, after rolling the goat about for a bit, got up and began to purr, walking up and down by the side of the outstretched goat ; then, suddenly turning round, he went up to his mate and punted her in the side with his head and rubbed himself along the side of her body, a caress which was received by the lady with a growl. I should here mention that this was the breeding season. It was a pretty sight, but as the male turned to repeat his importunities, the hunter's instinct in me got the better of my softer mood, and realizing that this was an opportunity to bag two panthers with one bullet, I waited until the two animals were again parallel with each other, and aiming high up on the shoulder of the male, I fired. The male dropped on the spot, but the female dashed away to my right, roaring loudly, I having failed to get in my second barrel on account of the smoke which hung densely in the damp evening air, this being in the days when smokeless powder was unknown. I heard the female panther roar at intervals several times as she went along a hillside behind me, which made me think that she was only hit in the forearm or paw and was expressing her opinion in unladylike language each time she tried to use the injured limb.

After putting another bullet into the male panther, to make sure, I got down from my tree, when, to my utter astonishment, the goat jumped up, and commenced to show his delight at seeing me by bleating loudly. On examining the little beast, I was still more surprised to find that he had scarcely a scratch on him.

He must have been paralyzed with fright, for I can hardly credit a kid with sufficient sense as to sham.

Next morning I brought out my bull-dog with the object of putting him on the trail of the wounded panther, though in doing so I felt that I was sending him to his "happy hunting ground," but it was infinitely better for him to die in this way than by my bullet, which was what it had come to, for of late he had become an intolerable nuisance and a constant danger to my other dogs, in whose company, of course, I could never hunt him.

The moment he smelt the blood of the panther on the ground, he became terribly excited and strained at his leash ; as soon as he was let go, he scurried off on the scent at such a pace, that we had no chance of keeping up with him.

We followed as fast as we could, but the going was very rough and steep, so that it was some time before we reached the crest of the ridge, where we halted a few moments to regain our wind.

Below us, on the further side of the ridge, was a densely-wooded dell filled with an undergrowth of dense grass and bushes, through which trickled a narrow stream of water. Suddenly, from this spot arose a tremendous uproar, for the plucky old dog had found the wounded panther, and without any further hesitation or delay had tackled it ; while the latter, rendered furious by its wound, was quite willing to meet him halfway in the matter.

A revulsion of feeling now came over me, and I would have given anything to save the brave dog's life. I dashed down the hillside regardless of obstacles, with the inevitable result that I soon found that I was travelling faster than my legs would carry me, and finally, taking a header down about thirty yards of hillside, I fetched up in a thorny bush. By the time I recovered my legs, the uproar below me had ceased, and I realized that I was too late, and that it was all over with the brave old dog ; but I could avenge him, and that was my one thought, as I again dashed forward to the spot which I had previously marked from above.

On reaching it, I almost stumbled over the body of the dog. It was stone dead, killed by a bite in the back of its head. At the same time I heard a noise on the other side of the nalla, and on looking up, I saw the panther making off along the opposite side of the ravine. I was only able to get a snapshot, but it told on her, for she spun round roaring, and came blundering down the hillside

straight for me. I waited until she neared the edge of the water before I gave her the contents of my second barrel. The bullet struck her in the nape of the neck, breaking the vertebra, and of course killing her instantly, though her impetus carried her on until she took a header into the nalla below, burying her head and fore-quarters deep in the ooze.

On pulling her out, we found that my bullet of the night before had completely shattered her forearm ; but we found more than this, namely, that a large portion of the skin and a part of the flesh of the forearm was torn off. On examining the dog, we found the missing portions in his mouth. We took him back to camp in a hammock made out of cloth, with the dead panther slung on a pole behind him. It was a sorrowful and yet a triumphant return, for what more glorious end could a dog have !

We buried him at the foot of a Peepul tree, the "*Ficus religiosa*" of India.

So much for bull-dogs, whom I have always found the same : a nuisance and a danger to one's other dogs, and too obstinately plucky to be of use from a sporting point of view.

After this I kept, in order to hunt dangerous game, a mixed pack of dogs, chiefly consisting of bull-terriers and terriers, and a few mongrel spaniels, and found that they answered fairly well for the purpose.

In the year 1876, when in the Shimoga District (Mysore States), I was deputed to report on some forests lying along a range of hills called the Billighirri Rangam Range. These forests I found full of all kinds of large game, so as soon as my report had been sent in, I and my dogs began to enjoy ourselves.

In those days I was in the habit of going to see my kills in person, for which purpose I usually left my camp before daybreak. One morning while on one of these tours of inspection, I found that a tiger had apparently only just killed the buff, a few minutes before my arrival, for the blood on the spot was quite fresh. However, it was then still too dark for us to be able to make out the trail, so we sat down and waited for the light.

In about half an hour's time it got sufficiently bright for us to see the drag, so we followed it. I was anxious to shoot the tiger offhand, so we proceeded very quietly for about three hundred yards, when

the trail led us into a dark and dense hollow full of bambus, where we were again obliged to halt and wait for more light.

In the meanwhile, we could hear the tiger cracking the bones of its kill about a hundred yards away. It was a most weird vigil, the only other sounds being the crows of the jungle-cocks heralding the break of day.

After a bit we again pushed on carefully, when for the first time apparently the tiger became aware of our presence, for she—for it proved to be a tigress—now began to growl at us, probably taking us for some wild animals. But it was still too dark for me to make out the form of the tigress, so we sat still for a few minutes longer. In the meanwhile the old girl kept on growling at us and cracking her bones.

At last I became conscious that she was dragging off her kill, so taking only one man with me to carry a spare rifle, I pushed on after her. We had proceeded perhaps some sixty yards, when suddenly down came the tigress at us, or rather in our direction, making the usual disgusting hubbub. But it was only bluff, for she stopped before she came in sight, and then apparently returned to her kill, while we remained hidden like mice against a bush. I strained my eyes to their utmost to obtain a glimpse of her, but did not succeed. So after a few moments, I again crept forward, and again the tigress made her bluffing charge, and with the same result to both parties. This was repeated three or four times.

In the meanwhile, the tigress was dragging her kill away ; she apparently took us for hyenas after her kill, for I have repeatedly seen both tigers and panthers make these halting and bluffing charges at hyenas that were hovering in the neighbourhood of their kills.

It was now also getting bright rapidly, so fearing that she might desert her kill and clear off, I began to press the tigress more quickly. At last I got my chance. I had just crossed a dry river-bed, and was about to proceed up the further bank, when—*waugh ! waugh ! waugh !*—straight over the spur of the bank came the tigress. But seeing that she had to deal with that dreaded creature man, she halted suddenly, crouching low in an undecided attitude, snarling at me. In the meanwhile, I went down on my knee. I never felt more





certain of a beast in my life, for she was scarcely ten feet from me, and right out in the open on top of the bank. But, alas! while negotiating a difficult piece of ground, I had placed my gun at half cock, for fear of an accident that might frighten away the tiger, and I had forgotten to place the trigger at full cock again.

Before I could rectify my mistake, the tigress whipped round and was off. However, I managed to get in a snapshot just as she was tipping over the bank, and knew that I had scored a hit.

Nor was I mistaken, for, on the further side of the bank, I found a quantity of blood, but from the lightness of the colour of this I knew it was not in a fatal spot.

My men then came up, and with their aid—by sending them up trees—I followed the wounded beast for about three miles. At last we ringed her into a patch of grass

I was crawling about trying to get a glimpse of the beast, when suddenly I saw her standing in the bed of a nalla; but before I could get my gun up, she sprang up on to the bank and got behind a clump of bambus, where she paused for a moment. I was using my smooth-bore with spherical bullets, so I fired at her through the bambu-clump, and saw her fall to the shot, the bullet pierced through four bambus, which no conical or explosive bullet would have done. But the beast recovered herself and at once disappeared.

I ought, of course, to have sent back to camp for my dogs. But I was on a hot trail, so that it was now a case of the old adage of "the more haste the less speed."

Hour after hour we followed that beast, during which she crossed a strip of forest that had been burnt. It was here that we were very near to being treated on the principle of the biter being bit. We had tracked the tigress over the ashes into an isolated bit of grass that had escaped being burnt, and were following her tracks, when I began to notice that we were going round in a circle. Proceeding further, I found the foot-prints of the tigress *on the top of our own foot-prints* where we had lately passed. There was no doubt that the beast was *stalking us!* So we immediately took cover behind an ant-hill, and awaited the beast's circuit. But though we heard her circle round again, she apparently suspected some thing and sheered off.



To make a long story short, we followed her until nightfall without coming up with her again. So when it was too dark to follow her trail, we blazed a lead to the nearest forest-line, and left her to be dealt with on the following morning, when I had made up my mind I would bring my dogs. We had had nothing to eat all day, so we were very thankful when we reached camp finally at about 9 o'clock at night.

Next morning we were on the spot with my dogs at 7 A.M., but as the track lay over burnt ground, there was practically no scent ; so I refrained from loosing my dogs, of whom we had about fifteen couple. We had, therefore, now to again take up the wearying work of tracking her by her footmarks in the ashes wherever she crossed burnt portions. At last the tracks led into a grassy valley that had escaped being burnt. Here we again found blood on the grass and bushes, and as the men of the locality assured me that in the bed of the valley was a *jheera* or spring of water, I had every hope that we would at last find our lady "at home".

It was now the dogs' turn, and under much better conditions than I had hoped for. No merry music now, or dashing away at full speed, as when on the scent of deer, for they knew by instinct that the scent of the quarry they were now on was that of a dangerous species, and consequently it behoved them to keep well together and within aid of their masters. Spreading out ever so little, the pack moved forward steadily, but in deadly silence, except when now and again one of the more timid of the dogs, taking alarm at some imaginary object, would give a short bark followed by a whine and a run back of a few paces. On such occasions the whole pack would generally halt with ears pricked forward, some with one forefoot raised, after the manner of a Pointer, listening intently with every muscle and sense on the alert ; then again a forward movement with perhaps an almost imperceptible action of drawing together on the part of the pack.

At last there was a *wouf* ! and the tigress broke cover and made off at her best pace. The quarry was now fleeing ; no longer the fear of a lurking foe, so the pack, with their blood fairly up, were away after it with a burst of music so thrilling to the heart of the true sportsman.

Down the stony bed of the valley, here again laid open by the recent fire, sped an elongated mass of yellow and black, travelling at a most incredible pace, which soon out-distanced the pursuing dogs. But a tiger can only go at this pace for a short distance, so I knew the pack would soon be up with it again, and would bail it up somewhere within at most half a mile.

Down this glade, through another dense patch of jungle, and over a small intersecting ridge into the valley beyond, went the music of the dogs. I had the legs of the natives who were with me, and soon out-distanced them ; I have never yet come across a native who was any good at sprinting. When I topped the ridge I found, as I expected, the tigress bailed up by the dogs. On seeing me she at once charged in my direction, but the moment she moved, the dogs attacked her in a body from behind ; so relinquishing her kindly intentions with regard to myself, she spun round and ran amok among my poor dogs, putting three of them out of action in the twinkling of an eye, and again making off down the valley as hard as she could go. The dogs, however, were now thoroughly roused and with a yell were after her, and bailed her up again within two hundred yards. Up to this I was too pumped and unsteady after my quarter mile sprint, to attempt a shot, for fear of hitting one of my dogs.

Having bailed up the tigress, I knew the dogs would hold her for some considerable time, provided I did not again rush forward in the foolish manner I had on the first occasion. Sportsmen will do well to take note of this, namely, that the sportsman's sudden appearance on such a scene will often stimulate his dogs, in their excited state, to too reckless daring, with disastrous results to themselves. So it is best for all concerned, to keep out of sight, to creep up quietly under some cover and to pick one's shot ; for on it depends the lives of several of the dogs, for on hearing the shot, the pack, accustomed to it with other game, will rush in at the tiger, which, unless killed stone dead by that shot, is sure to kill a good number of them before it is finally despatched.

This I now proceeded to do. I found that the tigress had also taken to strategy, for she had taken up her position with her back to a bank ; she was seated on her hindquarters with one forepaw raised ready to strike, her ears flat and her lips drawn back ; she had

evidently intended to anchor there for some time. The dogs, in a semicircle just out of reach, were fairly yelling at her, the nearer ones with their heads almost laid flat to the ground. The attention of the tigress being entirely taken up with the dogs, I was able to crawl round on to the bank above her without being seen. Peering cautiously over the edge, I found the tigress almost within six feet, with her back towards me, so it was the work of a moment to blow in the back of her head from where I stood, killing her instantly.

The dogs rushed in immediately and commenced tearing at the body, cheered on, I am afraid, by me in so doing, for I had not the heart to stop them in the climax of their enjoyment.

In fact on all such occasions, whether it be with a hare or a tiger, I always give full reins to my feelings in yodels and shouts of encouragement to the dogs, patting and soothing on each one in turn, letting them enjoy to the full the triumph of the moment. Away, at such times, with the stolid phlegmatic hunter who thinks it *infra dig* to be human even for a little while. I have occasionally met such individuals, and I am afraid their behaviour on such occasions has always made me lose my temper with them.

But as the parson said, "don't do as I do, but do as I say," for it is very bad policy if you wish to *train* your dogs with an eye to their future safety to encourage them to worry the body of a dangerous animal, for such familiarity is bound to breed contempt, with disastrous results, perhaps some day later on.

*Mais chacun a son goût* ; a merry life, even though it has to be a short one in consequence, is my motto in such matters. A dog has, to our sorrow, such a short span of life, and such glorious moments are so few and far between, that I prefer to let them take the risk entailed in allowing them to enjoy to the full any triumph which they may win.

The skin ! Oh, bother the skin ; let us enjoy ourselves. My dogs and I were now fairly dancing round the defunct tigress, the dogs were tugging and pulling at her in all directions, while I, hat in hand, was cheering them on until the want of breath forced me to desist and wipe the perspiration which was streaming down my face, while the dogs, when they were also tired, metaphorically did the same, and in a short while all had relinquished their tugging and were seated





panting, with tongues out round the carcass. True comrades together, we had enjoyed life, and were resting in contemplation of the supreme moment through which we had just passed.

By this time my men also turned up, and there was a rush on the part of both myself and the dogs for the twelve leathern water-bottles, which I always take out especially for the dogs, in case water should not be obtained ; and soon was to be heard the eager lapping of water on all sides.

It would have been a most enjoyable day but for the sad casualties among the dogs in the first act. Returning quickly to the spot, we found the first dog dead with its head smashed to a pulp with a single blow from the tigress' paw. The second had its back broken, but was dragging itself about by its forelegs whining painfully the while. When I stooped to examine her, she licked my hand, whimpering pitifully, and it was with tears in my eyes that I had to perform the dreadful task of shooting my poor little companion. It is one of the ironies of life that we so often have to pay so heavily for our enjoyments. But let us turn from the scene ; the third dog having escaped with only a few deep scratches, had his wounds washed out and dressed, and in a few days was quite well again.

To show how useful even a single dog can be in following up wounded felines, I will quote the following two incidents here. On 3rd February 1896, while camped at a village called Gopalpur, not far from the Katni railway junction in the Jabbalpur District, one of our buffs was reported to have been killed near our camp by a tigress.

On inspecting the kill, however, we found, from the smallness of the teeth-marks in the throat of the kill, that it had not been killed by a tigress but by a panther. So we did not organize a beat, but made a *machan* over the kill for my son H. to sit up for it in the evening.

I was rather suspicious about the kill, for though it had distinctly been killed by a panther, the whole of it almost had been eaten up, which no single or even two panthers could have done, for the buff was a large one. The panther, at any rate, must have been a large one, but there were no tracks about to show what had actually taken place, the ground being hard.

In the afternoon H. got up in his *machan*, and at about 5 P.M. a large tigress came out in a glade and sat down on her hunkers about a hundred yards off. Expecting her to come up to the kill eventually, H. refrained from taking an unnecessarily long shot, so he waited and watched for nearly an hour, while the tigress did the same, sitting like a dog and listening silently and immovable, except for her head which she turned now and again in different directions.

At last she looked over her shoulder and growled, and then walked away into the jungles, never to return.

Looking in the direction in which the tigress had growled, H. saw a large male panther advancing.

Next morning we found the footprints of the tigress in the river-bed near by ; so this explained the mystery : the panther had killed the buff in the first instance and was then driven off by the tigress, who polished off what had been left by the panther.

I omitted to mention that we had dragged the remains of the kill to a more convenient tree about fifty yards off. So when the panther came, he first went straight to the place where he had left his kill under a bush, lay down there for another hour, apparently in contemplation, from which he was only aroused into activity by the arrival on the scene of a pair of hyenas, whom he immediately charged, and having put them to flight, returned and continued his watch under his bush.

This was repeated three or four times, the hyenas in the interval jeering at him with blood-curdling sounds from a safe distance. By this time it had got quite dark, for there was no moon.

When it had become almost too dark to see anything at all, H. thought he could make out a black form creeping very, very slowly across an open space, coming towards the kill, taking what seemed to him to be about half an hour to cross a space of about 20 yards. When the object reached the kill, it became invisible, and H. could only hear the panther eating the kill.

The chance of seeing it again having gone, H. now decided at having a chance shot at the spot where he thought it was, so he fired.

The bullet afterwards proved to have struck the panther low down in the chest, which made it roll over and flounder about roaring under the tree for some time, before a second chance shot made

it shift its position to a safer spot about a hundred yards off, where it remained groaning and roaring.

On hearing the shots and roars in camp, I immediately hurried with a number of men with torches to see what had happened, for I was very anxious about what H. might be doing, though I had previously made him promise me faithfully on no account to get down from his tree until I came myself to fetch him, for I know what young men are apt to do sometimes on such occasions.

However, he kept his promise to me, but on my arrival blundered down his tree and wanted to go at once to the spot where he had last heard the panther groaning, saying he was certain it must be dead ; to which I replied that if it was dead, it would remain there dead till the morning, while if it was alive, it would be madness for anyone to go near him on a pitch dark night. This is sound advice, which all young sportsmen will do well to take to heart. So we left him severely alone luckily, and returned to camp.

At this time we had a little one-eyed fox-terrier (the other eye having been knocked out by a bear) which went by the name of Puppy. Puppy had acquired a curious habit of always taking possession of the carcass of any tiger or panther that was brought into camp, lying between the forepaws of the dead feline, and charging out at and biting any native that came near.

Next morning, on going to look for the wounded panther, we took this dog with us, in case we should have to track it, though we were almost certain that we would find the panther dead close by. On reaching the spot we found plenty of blood, a trail of it leading away in a southerly direction ; on to this trail we put Puppy, and away went the little dog, trotting on ahead of us with its nose to the ground, halting every now and again to look over its shoulder to see if we were following.

At about a hundred yards from the *machan* the dog stopped and commenced to bark sharply, dancing in a semicircle round a thick bush, but at the same time keeping at a safe distance from it. The dog, however, had only winded an extra strong whiff of the scent, caused by the panther having lain up at this spot for many hours ; for on examining the bush, after having first pelted it well with stones, we found the stem of the bush standing in a regular pool of



blood, some of which was quite fresh, showing that the panther had only lately moved away, probably on hearing our arrival on the scene of its former kill. It was fortunate, therefore, that I had not given way to my son's entreaties, on the night previous, to look for the panther there and then, for had we done so some of us would surely have been mauled.

Note this, oh, ye budding Nimrods, and never attempt to follow up a wounded feline at night—no matter though he be only ten feet out of your ken—leave him until next morning; for if he is dead you will find him in the morning, while if he is alive and you attempt to go near him in the dark, well, you will deserve what you will surely get. Even with torchlight the hunter would have a very poor chance, especially as his torch-bearers are almost sure to bolt on the first roar from the feline, leaving the unfortunate hunter, helpless in the dark, at the mercy of a deadly and invisible foe.

We will now again take up our trail. The dog proceeded as before, keeping about forty yards ahead of us, now smelling at a blade of grass here, and at a leaf there; on examining the blade of grass in question we would find perhaps a tiny speck of blood, which, without the aid of the dog, it might have taken us an hour to find, with no other marks on the hard ground to go by, and it is such delays that so often enables wounded quarry to make good its escape.

In this case, however, we were able to make the running, for as long as we had the dog in front of us on the trail in fairly open country, we were able to dispense with the delay caused by the usual caution otherwise necessary, and with that of having to track for ourselves. So it was not very long before we caught sight of our quarry trying to scale a steep hillside; but finding the latter too abrupt for him to negotiate in his wounded state, he skirted along its side for some distance until he dropped out of sight into the bed of a nalla.

The dog saw him, but "wasn't taking any" and came running back to us yapping sharply. Here again the action of dogs of the same breed differ, for while Puppy in this instance ran back, my son's dog Bijou, a fox-terrier of a purer breed from imported parents,

on another occasion put out and chased a full-grown panther for over a hundred yards ; but such a quality of fearlessness in a dog is useless and a nuisance on such occasions

In the meanwhile our wounded panther, unknown to us, had doubled almost on his tracks, passing back among the bushes almost within fifty yards of us.

The first intimation we received that this had occurred, was a shout from a man who had strayed away to our left in search of some jungle berries. Looking round, we saw the man clutching an overhanging bough with his legs drawn up, while at the same time



Bijou.

the panther charged blindly beneath him. A narrow escape, but it was his own fault for not keeping with and behind us.

The trail now led down the stony bed of a nalla, which at length forked off into two branches. At this point my son and I separated for a moment, each examining one of the beds of the nalla, in order to ascertain which it was that the panther had taken, for the dog seemed to be temporarily thrown out.

Puppy fortunately accompanied my son for he had scarcely gone twenty yards when the dog warned him of danger by suddenly dashing away to the left in a frightened manner, barking sharply

and looking towards a cleft in the right bank of the *nalla*, now within six feet of H.

Had he passed by this cleft the wounded panther, to a certainty, would have sprung on to his back and, in all probability, have killed him on the spot by a bite in the back of his neck.

But H. was warned in time by the behaviour of the dog—so keeping his face towards the lurking foe, he backed away to a safer distance and then called out to me.

We then together each dropped on to one knee and ordered the men behind us to throw stones into the cleft on the opposite bank.

For some time a regular fusillade was maintained, when at last an extra large stone apparently found the panther, who then immediately charged out at us straight across the river-bed. I reserved my fire for emergencies, as well as to see how H. would handle the situation. Nor was I disappointed, for he rolled the charging panther head over heels, reserving his second barrel also for eventualities. The panther, however, suddenly recovered himself and nipped back into his retreat, receiving now H.'s second barrel and a shot also from me as he vanished into his retreat.

We then continued the stoning, when, to our surprise, out he came at us again, and again H. knocked him over, followed by two more shots as he again regained his retreat, though tottering and with his entrails dragging on the ground behind him.

Further stoning proved futile, so we concluded that the plucky beast had at last been done for.

So we moved round on to the other bank and advanced towards the cleft within it, carefully throwing stones into it as we went, getting no reply.

At last H., who was a long way the tallest of our party, called out : "I can see him ; it is all right, he is dead," and immediately advanced to the edge of the ditch, when *wouf ! wouf !* up jumped the panther at his feet. H. fired from his hip, with his gun almost touching the panther's head, while I fired past H. and hit the panther in the throat.

That was the end.

Of the ten shots fired at him, we found that no less than nine had struck him. This shows the wonderful vitality felines sometimes have, panthers more so than tigers.





These nine shots were fired from twelve-bore guns ; the bullets were spherical soft lead, driven by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  drams of black powder, and all fired within a range of 25 yards. One shot had struck him low down in his chest ; one broke his fore-arm ; one pierced him diagonally through his chest and out under the shoulder-blade ; one broke his hind foot ; three had gone through his body from side to side and the last two shots only, one of which brained him and the other in his throat, killed him.

With all this wonderful vitality, pluck and persistence, it shows what would have been H.'s fate, had the dog permitted him to go by the lair of that waiting fiend.

Previous to this adventure we were at a place called Machmacha, on the borders of the Native State of Rewa. Here, a certain Nimrod had, in his usual manner, been harrassing the jungles right and left to no purpose whatever, after tigers. In these jungles he had been trying after a certain tigress that had taken to man-killing, but as he had no idea whatever of beating, he only achieved in leaving her more wideawake than ever, so that it was with considerable doubts in my mind that I finally determined on taking her in hand, to figure as my son H.'s "first tiger," as he had only lately joined us from England.

On 23rd January 1896, it was reported that she had killed one of our buffs and, on our examining the lay of the land, we found that it was an open question as to whether she was to the right or left of her kill, for there were no tracks to show either which way she had come or which way she had gone.

So I determined that the first beat should be a "silent beat." This was accordingly done, the only noise allowed being the clicking of two sticks with which each beater had been supplied. The only thing that came out in this beat was a bear, which went and sat at the foot of my son's ladder with her back to it, putting her nose up in the air sniffing and trying to locate the whereabouts of the human being whom she could obviously smell. H. looked across to me and smiled, while I shook my head at him, which he understood.

He was rewarded for his forbearance, for in beating the adjoining block of jungle, we succeeded in enclosing the tigress within our beat.

A stop to H.'s left, however, very nearly spoilt the chance, by losing his head and shying his axe at the tigress, which caused the tigress to come bolting down past H. like a streak of lightning.

He hit her, however, as was afterwards proved, through her stomach. H. immediately scrambled down his tree and commenced to run in the direction in which she had gone. Luckily, I was able to intercept him, and putting my hand on his shoulder, pulled him back, telling him he was on his way to certain death, which was true, for we afterwards found that the tigress only went three hundred yards and then laid down under a bush with her head towards us, apparently waiting for us, and woe would have betided us had we gone blundering on in the heedless way that H. wished to.

This is a danger that some young men, when their blood is up, are very apt to incur, and is what I am constantly inveighing against. I gave master H. a bit of my mind pretty strongly, and told him plainly that he was a young fool, and refused point blank to have anything more to do with the tigress for that day and returned to camp much to his disgust—but though I did not tell him so at the time, I saw by the bits of entrails, etc., which the tigress had left behind in her tracks that she had been wounded fatally, and that we were almost certain to retrieve her on the next day. My son laughs at me to the present day, alleging as a quotation “you d——d young fool! where the h——l are you going to?”

The next morning we started for the scene with our famous Puppy, and some twenty jungle-grazed buffaloes.

On arriving at the scene we took up the blood-trail, which, after about three hundred yards, we found led to a large bush, where Puppy behaved in much the same manner in which she did in the panther incident.

On examining the bush in question, we found that the tigress had evidently lain there for several hours, with her head pointed in the direction from which she had come, where, at that time, she could hear her human foes, and determined to wreak her vengeance if they approached her. She then apparently became violently sick, for large fids of still undigested buffalo meat, even to the skin on it, were lying in heaps under the bush. I now knew that we would be almost certain to find her, probably dead, within at most 600 yards ;

for when a tiger gets sick in this manner, it is certain indication of a stomach-shot, the results of which my experience has almost invariably been, as above stated.

However, we could not be certain of finding her dead, so we had to advance with the utmost caution.

From this bush, however, the blood almost entirely ceased, the wound probably being choked up by fat, as often happens in the case of stomach-shots.

The buffaloes were now of little use, for the scent was stale. The little dog, however, held on confidently, while we followed cautiously behind, though there was not the slightest sign by which the human eye could detect which way the tigress had gone ; so without the dog the chances of finding the tigress in that jungle was the chance of finding a needle in a hay-stack.

The scent at first led over some fairly open ground for about 500 yards, so there was no danger in following the dog ; but after this it entered a very dense patch of grass. As it was not good enough to push our way through this under the cover of only one dog, when there was a possibility of a wounded tigress lying in wait for us in it, we now again drove the buffaloes before us.

They had scarcely gone fifty yards into the grass, when a tremendous hubbub ensued ; such roaring, bellowing, snorting and ponderous rushing about of infuriated buffaloes from all sides converging on to one central point in the grass, that it was difficult at first to make out what was going on, except that they had found the tigress, but whether dead or alive, we could not tell for the noise the buffaloes themselves were making.

Our men at once all got up trees like a lot of monkeys, while H. and I pushed forward together quickly, to try and get in a shot while the tigress was engaged with the buffs, so as not to let her escape.

However, we soon found that there was no question of escape for the tigress, for we suddenly saw her body shot up into the air by a burly old bull. The glimpse we got of her stiff form in the air, before it disappeared again in the cloud of dust and seething mass of roaring and infuriated bulls, showed us that she was quite dead. But being strangers to these maddened brutes, we dared not go near



them, so ran back and made the herdsmen come down from their trees, and, with their help but with great difficulty, managed at last to drive the buffs off before they had damaged the skin past repairing. Even then the brutes hovered round us with their tails in the air, trying every now and then to have another go in at the defunct tigress. H., who was standing lost in admiration of his "first tiger," was suddenly awakened from his dreams by finding a big bull's snorting head thrust rudely between his legs from behind, and would have had a free ride on its head had he not been very smart in skipping out of the way, as the bull rushed in again at the dead tigress under a hail of blows from the sticks of the herdsmen, who at last drove it off.

This tigress was a very dark-coloured one, measuring 9 feet 4 inches, whose successful recovery we intimated to camp, by at once despatching a "bush telegram," *i.e.*, a pencilled note placed in the cleft of a stick, with a feather stuck into the cleft at the opposite end. The feather is the sign of "urgency" among natives.

It will be seen from the above two incidents with the panther and tigress, respectively, that it is very risky to depend on *one* dog only for one's safety. If we had a pack of dogs with us when following the wounded panther, the latter would never have been able to charge the man in the manner he did; while in the second case, it would have been palpable suicide to enter such dense grass after a wounded tigress, depending only on one dog. In both these cases the trail, up to a certain point, lay over fairly open country, and on such ground the services of even a single dog were invaluable; but when dense cover was reached it became evident that one dog alone was not sufficient. Moreover, one of the chief uses of a pack of dogs in following up wounded, dangerous game, lies in the fact that they serve so well in drawing off the attention of the game from the hunter himself, and so screen and even protect him from attacks; this a single dog, as a rule, is quite unable to do. In my opinion a pack of dogs of less than twelve in number is too weak to divert an attack on the hunter, or to engross the attention of the wounded game in the manner it ought to. With a pack of, say, a dozen couples of bull-terriers and harriers, the hunter can penetrate almost any cover with almost perfect safety, and, in general, take far greater

liberties than with a weak pack. The point, however, to remember is, never to enter a dense piece of cover when after wounded dangerous game unless you have before you a sufficiently strong pack of dogs or herd of buffaloes.

In the Chindwara district, on the 10th April 1887, it was reported to me that one of my buffs had been killed by a tiger in the Aliwara forest. On examining the kill I found by the side of it what appeared to be the footmarks of a young male tiger about three years old ; but the marks of the canine teeth in the neck of the kill looked suspiciously small, though otherwise the buff had been killed in exactly the clean and neat way as a tiger would have killed it. So it was still with some doubts in my mind as to whether I had to deal with a tiger or a very large male panther, that I sat up on my shooting-ladder, for it was then too late to do anything else. Indeed, I had not even time to arrange a screen round me, while I was also seated only about seven feet from the sloping ground behind.

The sun had just set, when I heard something in the leaves behind, and on looking round I saw an enormous panther flattened to the ground with ears laid back grinning at me. He must have mistaken me for an extra large sized monkey, for the twitching movement of his body showed that he was about to spring at me, and I only just had time to slew my gun round and fire, when with a roar, a dark mass hurled itself in my direction knocking away from under me my ladder, which, in my hurry, I had failed to tie to the tree as I usually did.

When I recovered from my partially stunned condition. I found myself seated on the ground while in the grass scarcely ten feet away a tremendous uproar was going on, accompanied by gurgling gasps showing that the panther at any rate was badly hit.

Backing away quietly from my unpleasant neighbour, I endeavoured to get a glimpse of him by climbing a tree near by. It was a risky thing to do, for panthers are as quick at climbing trees as a cat, and had he caught sight of me he might have pulled me down before I was half way up.

But it was now nearly dark, and all I could see was the waving of the grass among which he was floundering. So I was obliged to give him up for the time being and return to camp.

Next morning I returned with my pack of dogs consisting of about fifteen couple ; they were chiefly Australian Harriers bred from a pair that I had brought out with me from Australia. Jack and Fly were the parents of these dogs, while Gaylad, Gaylass, Vixen and Snow, I remember, were the pick of their progeny. There were also some bull-terriers headed by the redoubtable Jock, and three long-dogs, half-breeds between a Poligar and an English greyhound, led by the dark and fearless slut Piaree.

The majority of this pack, however, were Harriers who were particularly fearless in regard to feline, owing, I take it, to their not yet having acquired the necessary instinct.

As soon as I let them go on the scent of the wounded panther, away went the Harriers in full song, with all the other dogs after them, and it was not long before I heard a *wouf! wouf!* followed by the baying of the dogs. On reaching the spot a pretty scene from a hunter's point of view revealed itself. There was the huge panther lying along a low bough of a tree growing on the banks of the shallow bed of a river. The dogs were all round the base of the tree jumping up, trying to get at the panther, while one cheeky little terrier was actually trying to climb the trunk of the tree.

I was so taken up in watching the interesting sight, that I forgot to fire when suddenly the panther, catching sight of its human foes, bounded down on the further side and was off again with the pack after him.

This time he managed to get into a narrow cave among the fissures of some rocks on the further side of the river bank.

Besides the entrance at the bottom, the cave had a chimney-shaped exit at the top, so I blocked up the latter with logs and brushwood. In the meanwhile, there was a scrimmage going on at the entrance, for the dogs were trying to force their way in ; in fact Piaree was already half in and I had to pull her out by her hind legs. I now had all the dogs caught up, and ascending the bank again I set fire to the brushwood piled on the top hole ; my object being to smoke the brute out by the lower hole so that I might get a clear shot at him in the bed of the river below me. But the perverse beast first tried to claw his way through the burning logs at the top ; failing in this he dashed out of the bottom entrance, only to be bowled head





over heels by my first barrel and finished off with the second. When I was sure he was quite dead, I let all the dogs loose, and didn't they enjoy themselves! Altogether this was a very satisfactory bit of sport from start to finish.

Let us now away again to another scene, with the same pack of dogs, but this time concerning '*Felix jubata*,' the hunting-leopard, otherwise called the *Chita*.

A detailed account of this is given elsewhere, so I will only touch lightly on it here as concerning the dogs in question.

*Diary, dated 27th January 1887, Camp Kokut, District Chindwara—*

On the evening of the above date, while walking along a forest line, I suddenly came across a family of five *Chitas*, evidently a female and four nearly full grown cubs. After watching them at play for some time, I fired at one of them, which then bounded out of sight into the bordering grass. It was too dark then to do anything, but feeling certain that I had hit the one I had aimed at, I determined to come back the next day with my dogs. This I did, and to make a long story short, we later on found the one I had fired at, dead, while the dogs ran down and killed the other four with very little outside help, and some of the dogs were somewhat mauled in so doing.

Among game which are dangerous when wounded may sometimes be classed the bison, and most certainly the wild buffalo, which is dangerous at any time. With regard to the latter I have not found dogs to be of much use. In the first place, buffaloes usually frequent such marshy and densely reeded places that dogs find it extremely difficult and often impossible to follow the trail. Secondly, when once a buffalo is on the run with frights aboard, and determined to give leg-bail, he takes no more notice of the dogs at his heels than if they were so many flies, so the dogs fail entirely in the object of the hunter, namely, to bail up the buffalo and keep his attention occupied, while their master creeps up and administers the *coup de grace*. Such contemptuous indifference on the part of the buffalo is humiliating, and the efforts of the dogs usually result only in the quarry being chased hopelessly out of the reach of the hunter, which otherwise might not have been the case.

After perhaps many hours of such futile pursuit the poor dogs returned in twos and threes thoroughly exhausted and dejected, and

on their roll-call being taken it will often be found that several of their number are missing, having been killed either by panthers or crocodiles during the course of the chase.

The marshy reed haunts of the buffalo are generally infested by these pests, and I lost so many good dogs in the district of Chanda from this cause and with such disappointing results that I at length made it a rule never to use my dogs to follow up wounded buffaloes, preferring to take my chance of doing so alone on foot.

With bison the matter is very different. They generally inhabit country which is much easier, though hilly, to work over with dogs, while they are also more sensitive to canine importunities and therefore more easily bailed up by them. I have on several occasions retrieved wounded bison with the aid of my dogs, but the account of one such must suffice here. It was on a beautiful winter's morning in the year 1869, in the Ahiri Forests of Chanda, that I and a few of my men, with about a dozen dogs on leash, were proceeding down a forest fire-line, when on turning a sharp corner we suddenly came on a solitary old bull bison standing looking at us, only a hundred yards away. What a grand sight he was, with his grand old head raised and one fore-foot pawing the ground. I hastily motioned to the man behind me to give me my twelve-bore rifle, but before I could raise it to my shoulders, the bull had whipped round and was off with swift deer-like bounds presenting only his stern for me to shoot at. I nevertheless took the shot, which the bull responded to by violently kicking up his hind legs two or three times as if stung by something, so I knew I had scored a hit. Loosing the dogs immediately, we were after him as fast as we could go, and after about half a mile we became aware by the baying of the dogs that they had bailed him up.

Pausing for a few moments in order to steady myself, I crept up to within twenty-five yards of the bull, but busy as he was with the dogs he spotted me and again thundered off, but quick as a flash a bull-terrier sprang at him and fastened himself on to the bull's nose, being carried in this manner, swinging in the air, for fully fifty yards, until the bull, receiving a shot from me behind the shoulder, plunged heavily on to his knees, and with the second barrel, rolled over on to his side and expired. The bull-terrier never let go the whole while

and was still hanging to the nostril of the bull when I came up and patted him on the back.

On examining the carcass, we found that my first shot had only inflicted a slight flesh wound in the hind leg, so, but for the dogs, we would never have seen the bison again, for they are prodigious travelers when frightened. They are also very swift and none but strong fast dogs have a chance of coming up with them. Harriers, I have no doubt, would do, but on this occasion my pack consisted chiefly of Brinjara and Poligar hounds, who hunt by both scent and sight.

When hunting in thick jungle forests, one cannot afford to pander to old home prejudices regarding hunting by both scent and sight. In tropical forests the hunter should use any means at his command to shorten the chase as much as possible, for the longer the chase is, the greater the chance of the quarry being run hopelessly out of his reach, having, as he has to in thick jungle, to follow on foot himself, while the likelihood of some of the dogs being snapped up by marauders on the way during a long chase greatly increases.

It will be found that if a few long-dogs are permitted to accompany a trail-hunting pack, the quarry, such as bison and sometimes buffalo, besides sambar, cheetle, etc., will be bailed up far quicker than without them. Poligar, Brinjara and greyhounds do very well for this purpose. I have found from practical experience that they keep with the rest of the pack until the quarry is in sight, when they shoot ahead and hamper his progress until the other dogs come up.

After a considerable experience in following up wounded dangerous game, I am of the opinion that an ideal pack for following up wounded tigers, panthers, bears, buffalo and bison, would be a pack of about a dozen couple, half consisting of pure-bred Australian Harriers, and the other half of large sized bull-terriers, supplemented with three or four half-bred Poligar greyhounds.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

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### DOGS FOR DEER, NEILGAI AND ANTELOPE.

When hunting deer with dogs through dense forest cover, forced as the sportsman is to follow on foot, he is entirely dependent on the cry of his dogs to indicate to him the direction in which they have gone. Most of the domestic dogs indigenous to India run mute, while, moreover, they will not *stick to* their quarry, but calmly allow him to go on unmolested if they find that they are not strong enough in numbers to pull him down at once: for this reason they are of little use for the purpose when they alone are employed. Obvious as these drawbacks are, I nevertheless wasted a lot of time and money during the early part of my career by keeping large packs of these dogs, but in time I learnt better and employed them only as a supplement to my pack of Harriers, on account of their superior pace, weight and strength. After trying many kinds of dogs, I came to the conclusion that none of them came up to the Harriers of the Australian variety. They are larger and more hardy than English Harriers, very tenacious, and give tongue strongly, the music of which can be heard a long way off. I used a pack of these dogs for a period of eight years between 1884 and 1891, hunting with them successively in the districts of Baitool, Chindwara, Seoni, Bilaspur and Mundla; during that time I ran down with their aid, and killed, a large number of Samber, Cheetle, Neilgai, a few Barasingha or Swamp-deer, Berkhi and Khakar; also, when wounded, Black Buck and Chinkara.

The most enjoyable time of the year for both man and beast, when hunting on foot with dogs, is during the cold season in December and January. During these two months, though the cover is a bit heavy, one is not knocked up so much by the heat, which at other times of the year is so distressing. However, hunting on foot with dogs may safely be indulged in up to about the 15th of March, if precaution be taken to knock off at latest by ten o'clock in the day. The cover in February and March is much lighter and, therefore, more easily worked, while by this time

the horns of both Cheetle and Samber are in their prime, just previous to their being cast.

On account of the lessening shade, both Cheetle and Samber resort to patches of evergreen cover, such as that afforded by Karonda, Maljan and Jamun. At this period, moreover, stags with horns in their prime are more often found alone, as they are then on the point of shedding their horns.

It was just such a solitary old stag Samber that I tracked one day, on the 1st May 1885, into a ravine full of Karonda, evergreen, and grass. His footmarks of an older date on the animal track showed that this was a regular run of his, and as the nearest forest was fully three miles away, I felt certain that the old fellow had made this his home for the time being. I, therefore, made a careful note of the locality for the country round about was a mass of hills and ravines, entirely denuded of trees except for Karonda bushes; and only those who have been among them know how difficult it is to find one's way back to any particular ravine, unless you previously mark its position very carefully.

I and my family at this time were camped at the Korai forest bungalow (Seoni District), about four miles from these ravines. Next morning I was up before daybreak, on account of the weather, and after having had a cup of coffee and something to eat, I mounted my horse and started off with my pack of Harriers, syce and a few men to carry the leathern water-bottles which I always take full of water for the dogs on such occasions, while a couple of orderlies brought up the rear with my rifle and spears. We took it easy going there, for I knew we would require all our superfluous wind for the work we had before us, so the sun was well up by the time we reached the spot.

Riding was now out of the question, as I knew the stag would keep as long as possible along the ravines; for the same reason I knew it would be useless to try and beat him out on to the level country beyond, for he would only break back over the line of beaters. So I determined to make a detour and take up a commanding position with my dogs about a mile further down the ravine, into which his fresh footprints showed that the stag had entered that morning. Telling my men to give me half an hour's law, and then to beat

quietly in my direction without any shouting, I proceeded to the spot indicated, and waited.

The beat had been in progress perhaps a quarter of an hour, when I caught sight of the old stag creeping craftily below me, through the Karonda bushes, with his head low and his massive horns laid well back over his shoulders. It was extremely interesting to watch his anxiety not to betray his whereabouts to his enemies ; stopping every now and again to listen, without turning his head or altering his crouching position, his movements reminded me strongly of those of a weasel under similar conditions. I gave him a quarter of an hour's start, and then put my dogs on his trail, and away they went with a cheery burst of music down the bed of the ravine, and out of sight round the corner

For the first mile the trail kept to the more or less level, though winding, bed of the ravine, so I was able to make good going at the beginning ; but after this, it led up and down over a series of steep ridges, which divided the numerous ravines. I had taken the precaution to previously convert the spear which I carried into an Alpine stock, by knocking off the leaden weight from the butt, and sharpening the butt with an axe, and this was now invaluable to me in negotiating these very distressing ascents and descents.

Puffing and panting up one side, tobogganing down over bush, bramble and sharp rocks on the other, I had travelled perhaps another half a mile in this manner, over this very distressful country, when to my relief I saw the stag burst out of the ravines and take across over the level ground above, heading evidently for the forests and a stream which now lay about a mile and a half away. The dogs were close on the heels of the stag, and being well acquainted with the country, it was not difficult for me to guess that the old fellow was making for some pool of water which he knew of.

On reaching the level ground, I steadied my pace a bit, until I regained my wind, and then lengthening my stride, I pressed on, and soon arrived panting on top of the precipitous banks overlooking the sandy bed of the stream. Below me was a pool, and in it was the old stag standing at bay with lowered horns and heaving flanks. His bristling mane and dilated eye-pits displayed a strange admixture of rage and terror. The dogs were baying and rushing through





the water at him, on all sides, only to be driven back in turn, by the rapid strokes of his sharp horns and hoofs. The old tragedy so often described by poets and hunters, was now again being enacted here before me.

Pausing a moment to admire the stirring scene, I dashed to aid my dogs, as I feared some of them might be injured if I delayed longer. The stag, however, saw me coming, and made off down the pool, while I splashed along after him, only to find myself, without any warning, flat on my face in the water, having slipped on some slime-coated stone on the bottom. Rising again to my feet, spluttering and bedraggled, and retrieving my floating hat and sunken spear, I resumed my amphibious progress towards our quarry, which the dogs had again bailed up, forty yards further down the pool. Seeing my approach, the stag again turned to flee, when suddenly something flashed through the air from the perpendicular bank above, burying its gleaming point deep in between his shoulders. The stag dropped as if struck by lightning, subsiding in a spread-eagle fashion with his nose under water ; a spear, hurled with the skill of his race, by my Brinjara orderly, had severed the spinal chord of the stag and laid him low in the manner described.

I was very pleased with the manner in which this orderly had kept up with me, and with his timely and accurate intervention with his spear, which probably saved the dogs from a nasty accident or two, which are so often incurred on the arrival of the master, when the quarry is a Sambar. I therefore added a money present to my commendations, but at the same time warned him to be always careful how he used his spear when the dogs were close up.

The remainder of my men, with my horse, did not turn up for another half an hour. In the meanwhile, having spread my wet clothes on the rocks to dry, I disported myself in the deeper portions of the pool, the scene of our late adventure. When the men turned up, I robbed two of the cleaner looking of their *chadars* or sheets, which most natives carry with them, and wiping myself dry with one, I wrapped the other round me and lay in the warm sunshine until my own clothes were quite dry.

In my younger days I would have made light of a wetting and would have sat about in the wind in my wet clothes allowing them to

dry on me, with the certain result of at least a bad go of fever, if not dysentery or even something worse. Young men are very pigheaded in such matters, and no amount of talking or advice from their more experienced elders makes the least impression on them, until they learn by bitter, sometimes *very* bitter, experience when it is almost, if not quite, too late. It took many a sharp lesson to teach me to take even the most obvious of ordinary precautions necessary in this country.

But what is the use of talking like this to a young man freshly out from Home, an athlete perhaps, proud of his physical strength and late athletic achievements, and anxious to prove you wrong, that he has the "constitution of a horse," etc., etc. He only puts you down in his own mind as an old fogey suffering from liver, rheumatics and second-childhood.

It is only when they have been in hospital with some long and painful illness, with perhaps one or more serious operations performed on them, that they find time to reflect that there was some sense after all in what the "old man" said.

In the climate of India, Europeans can *not* take the same liberties, in regard to their health, which they can at Home, and this is the hardest fact to knock into the head of a young man when he first comes out to this country.

Such diseases as fever, dysentery, enteric, liver abscess, pneumonia, etc., etc., often have their origin in a neglect of only a few moments. "Oh! I am too tired now, I'll go and change in a little while," or "I'll go and change when I have finished my cigar." Yes, my boy, and pay for it perhaps with your life or the bitter experience of a long and painful illness.

Therefore, never for one moment neglect or delay in taking any precaution which is needful in the climate or country in which you are, no matter how tired or disinclined you may be at the time. But what is the use of talking; young people will only learn in such matters by their own experience.

Hi-ho! I must have been asleep—dreaming. I was giving a lecture to young men in regard to the care of their health in India; thought I knew better than that by now.

I am lying wrapped in a native *chadar*, enjoying the now pleasantly warm sunshine, while my clothes are drying on the rocks

below. In the distance are two groups of men, sitting in circles according to their caste, passing round the friendly *chilum* or pipe, improvised out of a single leaf from a neighbouring tree, some English tobacco having been supplied by me in honour of the occasion. Nearer by is tethered my horse, with a bundle of freshly cut grass in front of him, while from under a bush close by issues the tuneful snoring of Ram Din, my syce.

"Ho! Ram Din, get up you lazy rascal and fetch me my clothes." His pedal extremities are extended in my direction, presenting to view two targets of horny and corrugated soles, and as he took no notice of my plaintive appeal, I opened fire with the pebbles that were within my reach, but though I scored several bull's eyes, they



A STAG SAMBER (BUT NOT AN OLD NOR HEAVY ONE)

did not have the desired result, and I was contemplating the effect of an application of my lighted cigar-end to those horny soles, when a larger pebble than the rest found a tender spot, and Ram Din sat up with a grunt. Seeing that the Sahib was calling him, he jumped to his feet and quickly came towards me, hastily winding his head-gear as he came.

Being once again arrayed in my own clothes, which by this time were quite dry, I proceeded to inspect the slain, which had been dragged up out of the water by the men, and placed in the shade under a tree.

He was a very old stag, with an enormously heavy body, which was covered with old scars, the results of many a fight in by-gone



days. His horns, though very massive and corrugated, were stumpy, scarcely 33 inches in length. I have generally found this to be the case, in regard to the horns of very old stags.

Telling the men to cut off the head of the stag and to take it and the skin, with whatever meat they wanted, to camp, I mounted my horse, and taking with me my spear and my favourite dog Jack, I started off alone in the direction of my camp, the first part of my journey lying along the banks of the river.

At this time of the year, wild pigs may often be found, a whole sounder at a time, lying right out in the open, sunning themselves up to about ten o'clock in the morning. So, hoping to catch sight of a rideable boar, I was proceeding quietly along the top of the precipitous banks of the river, and had gone perhaps a mile or more in this manner, when I suddenly noticed Jack in the dry river-bed below me, going at full speed with his nose to the ground, evidently on the tracks of some animal ; but contrary to his usual custom, he was, on this occasion, running mute. This departure from the normal on his part, caused me a vague uneasiness, though at the time I could not say why ; so putting Fidget into a canter, I kept along parallel with him—Fidget being a beautiful mare which I had lately bought from a racing stable in Bombay, who though a bit impetuous, was very fast and surefooted.

Keeping level with the dog below, we proceeded in this manner about half a mile, when I saw, to my horror, that the animal, on whose tracks poor Jack was running, was an enormous old male tiger. From the high bank on which I was, I caught sight of the tiger for the first time when he was about a couple of hundred yards ahead, he was going through some short grass and bushes at a crouching trot, with head and neck bent low, having evidently caught sight of me and was on the run.

I shouted frantically to Jack to come back, but none are so deaf as those who will not hear. Poor old Jack was now in deadly earnest, for his time had come ; sympathising with the spirit of the old dog, the possibility of spearing the tiger before he got out of the level river-bed, flashed across me. Catching the infection from her master Fidget was now like a bit of quicksilver, here, there and everywhere, tossing her head wildly in the air. How we descended that





precipitous forty-foot bank without injury is a marvel to me. But landing on her nose and knees in the soft sand below, she picked herself up instantly and digging my heels into her sides, away we tore in the wake of the chase. Forty yards only now divided me from the tiger, who by this time was in full gallop down the left side of the river-bed. I was in hopes of being able to spear him and pass on out of his reach, before he recovered himself. Up to this, my horse accustomed as she was to chasing wild pigs had not realized what it was she was after.

Now only thirty yards divided us ; now twenty, it was an intensely exciting moment ; but the tiger, seeing me swooping down on him, sprang, with a savage growl, up an opening in the left bank of the river. At the same time Fidget, seeing and hearing the monster, became aware of the danger, and stood sheer up on her hind legs ; poising thus for a moment, she spun round, and giving one terrific bound, shot away like a rocket, with the bit firmly between her teeth ; nor could I stop her until she had gone fully six hundred yards from the spot.

At length, having pacified her somewhat, I managed to bring her back, though her return journey was more of a side dance than anything else, fighting hard with her head all the while to break away again. But go up that bank, she wouldn't. So seeing it was hopeless, I dismounted, and taking off my long silk "kamarband," which I always wear night and day, I tethered her securely to a tree. I then blew my hunting horn until I was exhausted, hoping that poor Jack would hear it and return. Vain hope, for by that time he had probably already been killed by the tiger, whom, with his reckless daring, he must have bailed up and attacked.

I plodded on through the dense tree jungle above, now running, now walking, halting now and again to call or blow the horn, but all to no purpose. There was not a sign of either dog or tiger, nor any tracks to go by ; nothing but the silence of the jungle around me.

Hearing the persistent calls of my horn, my men came to see what was the matter, and together we hunted those jungles high and low for miles during the whole of that day, only leaving off when darkness forced us to desist.

I should have mentioned that this tiger was one of the several notorious man-eaters of Korai, and was well known in this locality.

We had therefore been obliged to keep well together, as the men dared not spread out. The night was a pitch dark one, so we hastened to clear out of the thick forests into the more open country beyond, while I, on foot with a loaded rifle, at full cock in my hand, brought up the rear, for a man-eating tiger almost invariably attacks the last man in a party.

Needless to say I never saw Jack again, though we searched those jungles again and again the next day, and for several successive days. I offered a reward of twenty rupees for any information that would enable me to recover his remains, and in due course a Gond turned up one day, with a handful of hair and a few bones, which undoubtedly belonged to poor Jack.

Getting the man to guide us, we proceeded to the spot. It was in a little ravine about a mile and a half from the place where I had last seen the tiger, and which had been missed by us during our search. Here, under the dense shade of an overhanging Malain creeper, were some more bones and patches of hair, and my little son, then eight years old, while digging about among the leaves, discovered the steel collar with my name engraved on it, which Jack had been wearing at the time of the fatal chase. We buried his remains in the compound of the Korai bungalow, putting a stone over his grave, on which I had engraved a few words relating the manner of his death and the date thereof, which may possibly be there to the present day.

Jack was the father of my pack of Harriers, and had been imported direct from Australia ; in fact he and Fly, the mother of the pack, came out on the same ship with me. Jack and Fly and some, but not all, of their progeny were entirely wanting in instinct with regard to the danger attached to the larger feline. Strange to say, Fly also met her death by making an unprovoked attack on a feline, this time a pantheret in the district of Bilaspur, some years later, an account of which will be found among the panther stories.

I had many good runs after samber with my dogs, in the "talooks" of Shimoga, Sagar and Shikarpur, in the Mysore States. The country here was for the most part open, with small isolated granite hills and ranges dotted about here and there, which were the resorts principally of samber, bear and pig.



THE INEVITABLE.



Owing to the character of the country, I used, in those days, chiefly gazehounds of the Poligar and Brinjara types and many a good run they gave me ; but the account of one such reads much like another (though the actual experience is nothing like the same, on account of the constantly varying scenery and circumstances of ground traversed by the hunter) that I hesitate to inflict the reader further by giving an account of them. I will venture to do so only when some special incident is connected therewith as in the above.

Solitary stag Sambers, more often than Cheetle, are to be found in good hunting grounds, such as in isolated patches of jungle bordering on fields, etc. I once chased on foot a slightly wounded Samber over three miles of such country, chivying him from patch to patch, with the aid of only one little fox-terrier, and finally killed him, only a hundred yards from my kitchen tent. The head and horns of this identical stag are those shown in the photo in Chapter V, the horns measuring 43 inches, so an account of the manner in which they were secured may be of interest. It was during our Christmas camp at Majgaon in the year 1896, not far from the Katni railway junction, in the district of Jubbulpore, some of the lady guests of our party expressed a desire to see some Samber or Cheetle in their wild state, so mounting them on an elephant, two on either side, my son and I started off on foot to show the way to a patch of forests where we knew these animals were to be found.

On reaching the patch in question, we both of us also mounted the elephant, my son H. in front and I behind, and then pushed on through the dense Saharu cover. We saw plenty of animals, putting up herds of them every few hundred yards.

The ladies, I was glad to see, were in high spirits. "Oh look ! look ! Be quiet, can't you ? Oh ! don't, you are pushing me off the elephant, O-e-e-e-e." These and sundry other delightful little squeaks and squeals, well enough in their way, were disastrous to *sport*, and though personally I was pleased to see the girls enjoying themselves, the keener young blood at the helm was getting exasperated, for H. was then freshly out from Home.

At last, growling out some uncomplimentary remarks about "monkeys in a cage" he made the elephant sit down and got off.



In the wake of the elephant were following two men with our one-eyed terrier, Puppy, whom we brought in case we had to track up a wounded animal. Taking one of the men and Puppy with him, H. went off on foot to stalk in another direction, leaving me to look after our fractious consignment of—well, well, we enjoyed ourselves, each after our own manner, which was the main point.

Pushing on again, our elephant swaying and lurching through the dense bushy Saharu like a ship in a rough sea, now clambering up the sides of a steep bank, then sliding down the other, the progress of the ponderous old *Hathi* must have been a phenomenal sight to the animals of the jungle, unaccustomed as they were to seeing such beasts, for there are no wild elephants in these parts.

The curiosity of one such, led to his undoing, for I suddenly caught sight of a beautiful stag sambar, with splendid horns, standing staring at us as if fascinated, only about forty yards away ; but the unsteadiness of the elephant made it extremely difficult to shoot, and I only succeeded in breaking one of his hind legs as he dashed away on our halting. However, he had to be followed up, for I never allow an animal to die a lingering death, if I can possibly help it. Blundering down off the elephant I too was a boy again now : I rushed along the copious blood trail, but when the blood became scanty, I was obliged to slow down. How I wished I had Puppy with me.

At this point, I heard a shot in the direction in which my son had gone, so I "cooeed" for all I was worth, but he was too far off to hear me at first, and I dared not leave the trail, for in that sea of Saharu, I would probably never find it again, the slow old elephant having been left by me far behind.

In the meanwhile, H. having shot a fine stag cheetle, leaving his man to look after it, was coming, unknown to me, in my direction to fetch the elephant in order to pad the slain.

Calling out at intervals, he had just given a shout, when he regretted it, for bearing straight down on to him was a splendid stag sambar who, hearing the shout, of course turned aside at right angles, exposing to view a broken and blood-bespattered hind leg dangling behind him. Having heard my shot, he guessed at once that I had wounded this stag and forthwith he and Puppy gave chase, which for a time was fast and furious.

In the meanwhile, I was plodding slowly along the trail when, suddenly, to my surprise and joy I found arrow marks scratched in the ground on the trail and I knew that H. and Puppy were on the tracks ahead of me. A little later on, I heard faint shouts in the distance so, answering them, I legged it in that direction, and in time found my son sitting on a stump holding Puppy.

Referring to the latter, his first words were :—

“ This little devil has led me such a dance and has been chasing the samber from patch to patch before I had time to get on the further side of any of them. But now you have come, we will get him between us, he has just gone into that patch of jungle, and seems pretty well cooked.”

Well, to make a long story short, we chased that stag from one patch of cover to another, for he always managed somehow to dodge us until, at last, he came out by our camp, when I shouted out to my wife (who came running out of her tent on hearing the commotion) to have my other dogs let loose, and with their aid we finally bailed up the stag under a *ber* bush, a hundred yards in the rear of the kitchen tent. There the noble stag stood at bay, with his horns lowered and his stern pushed well in among the thorns of the bush, in full view of the whole camp establishment. I was extremely reluctant to shoot the poor beast, and would have let him go, had he not been wounded or carried such splendid horns. There was not much difficulty in conveying the meat to camp that day though, but for Puppy, we would never have seen the stag again. She had behaved splendidly, and it was interesting to see the way she hung on to the broken hind leg, bumping and swaying in the air as she was dragged along. The natives used to call her “ Kana,” meaning the “ one-eyed”. There was a joke in camp in regard to this : one day Puppy helped to run down a wounded pig, which on being examined, also proved to have only one eye, and it was asserted by some one, that Puppy had been seen running alongside of the pig, *neither of them being aware of the other's presence.*

I have never known samber in their wild state to make an intentional charge at a human being, they may lower their horns and even strike out with them, when standing at bay, but never deliberately charge. But in captivity they often become very savage and

dangerous to human life. There was a stag samber owned by Mr. H. Sharp, the Principal of the Government College at Jubbulpore, who had to be kept on a chain—I mean the stag had to be kept on a chain not Mr. Sharp. This stag broke loose one day and amused himself in chasing a native round and round the compound, until Mr. Sharp and Mr. Browning, the latter also of the Educational Department, pluckily rushed to his rescue but, being unarmed, they were both very seriously injured by the stag.

Black buck only charge when in captivity. Bull neilgai, in captivity, almost invariably turn vicious when they grow old and are then very dangerous, and even in their wild state they frequently acquire such a contempt for human beings, as to attack and gore those who try to drive them off their fields, while, as a last extremity, they will invariably charge when driven to bay, or pressed hard on horse-back.

Natives have told me that solitary bara-singa (swamp-deer) stags in their wild state sometimes make unprovoked attacks on human beings, but I doubt this. I have only known them to charge intentionally when they have been wounded, and then they become very vicious and, when chasing a man, will sometimes stick to him like a terrier after a rat, as I know from personal experience.

One day in the year 1889, in the district of Mundla, I wounded a bara-singa stag in the Banja Valley and put my Harriers after him. After half a mile's run, I found the dogs had bailed him up. It was a contrast, after samber, to see the furious rage with which he was rushing at the dogs, striking at them on all sides. Catching sight of me, he charged straight down on me bellowing loudly in a most determined manner, quite disregarding the dogs which were now attacking him in the flanks. The ground here was a mass of rolling stones and stepping on one of these as I fired, I missed him clean, and only just avoided the sweep of his horns by throwing myself on one side. Recovering from his impetus, he was round again on me immediately, as I jumped to my feet, and being armed then only with a single barrel rifle, which was now empty, I was obliged ignominiously to give "leg-bail," until I reached the friendly shelter of a thick tree trunk near by. But even here the brute stuck to me, and forced me to play at hide and seek round the tree while I reloaded.

At last, exasperated by the attack of the dogs, he turned round to go for them, thus giving me an opportunity, which I took, of bowling him over once and for all. The whole incident, regarding the charge, was over in less than a minute ; but it is sufficient to show how tenaciously vindictive these animals can sometimes be, when their dander has been fairly roused.

In regard to accidents to dogs, I have had many more casualties among them when running down cheetle, than with any other kind of deer ; not on account of these deer themselves, but on account of the marauders that infest their haunts, such as panthers, "muggers" (crocodiles) and snakes. Cheetle delight in the dense shade of vast leafy forests intersected by running streams of water ; in fact they are never found far from water, for they drink three times in the twenty-four hours, in the morning, evening and at midday. In such haunts, often far from all human habitations, they may frequently be found in herds of several hundreds together and, as a natural sequence, panthers and "muggers" are generally very numerous in such localities, and are a source of great danger to one's dogs. Many a good dog have I lost on account of them ; for this, and for the reason of the inevitable confusion caused by hunting in forests where so many animals were about, I eventually gave up the systematic hunting of cheetle, and only indulged in it when I was fortunate enough to find a solitary stag in fairly open country. On one occasion I lost no less than a third of my pack of thirty dogs, during a march of 344 miles, from Baitool to Bilaspur, in the midst of a rainy season ; but, on the other hand, I am afraid to say how many animals I ran down and killed with my dogs, during this trip, nearly always using a spear or a hunting-knife for the final *coup*. My course lay through some of the finest forests of India and, as the ground was soaking wet with rain, there was no difficulty about the scent, except of course when it was actually raining, so by the end of the journey I was fairly satiated with this form of sport, and gave up hunting cheetle altogether, except as above stated.

The small variety of "mugger," of which I speak, very rarely attacks human beings, so there is not much danger in bathing in pools frequented by them, though it is not always *absolutely* safe to do so, for I *have* known one, larger and more hungry than the rest, to

make such an attack on a few, but very few, occasions. An orderly of mine, by the name of Karim, was caught by one of these little brutes while bathing in a stream in the Jubbulpore district and was in the act of being dragged away, when he was rescued by his brother. These two brothers were the "clowns" of our establishment and their constant squabbles afforded us much amusement. The excuse Karim gave one day, for not coming when he was called, was that he was having his dinner and his brother would eat it all up if he came away! One would think that a bite from an animal living constantly in water would be a clean one, but this was not the case, and poor Karim's wound gave him a lot of trouble.

However, such attacks are very rare with this species, though human beings have a very short shrift if they come within the reach of the larger variety of the big rivers.

One day, while hunting in the Baitool district with W. K. (Mr. W. King, D.F.O. of Baitool), a very old friend of mine, one of our dogs happened to fall into a deep pool near by us. Immediately a black snout rose to the surface and came rapidly towards the dog, now floundering in the water. Being nearest to the scene, I at once jumped in and struck out hand over hand, and it was a race between me and the "mugger" as to who would reach the dog first. However, we both reached him at the same time, and then commenced a "tug of war"; we were fairly evenly matched, for the "mugger's" superior skill in the water was counterbalanced by my superior weight, for he was not more than three or four feet long. In spite of being dragged under several times, I hung on, and finally succeeded in wrenching the dog away. I then pushed the now badly mauled and helpless dog, up the perpendicular bank to W.K., who, by lying down flat on top of the bank, was just able to reach him. While I was in the act of doing this, there was a swirling rush behind me and the "mugger" actually placed one of his fore-feet *on my shoulder* and made another grab at the disappearing dog, but missed him. I must say that that vicious snap by my ear and clammy scaly paw next to my face, sent a shiver down my back, and I cleared out as quickly as I could, though the little brute never made any attempt to go for *me*. W. K., who, I am glad to say, is still to the fore and at present living in Ireland, can vouch for the

above incident. The dog though badly lacerated in the thigh, recovered after a little time.

A short while after the above incident, I was posted to Chindwara, which district borders on that of Baitool, and for some years it was the custom for the Kings and ourselves to have our Christmas camp together, at a place called Bordai, where a small stream formed the boundary line between the two districts, each party scrupulously camping within their own border, though our respective tents were only fifty yards apart, a plank across the "March" forming the connecting link.

On our side was a large spreading Banyan tree, and as see-saws, swings, Christmas-trees and fireworks, were the order of the day, the children of both parties used naturally to greatly look forward to these annual meetings.

It was at Bordai, in 1886, that W. K. and I, one day, spied a splendid stag cheetle, grazing by himself near our camp, so we went back quietly and fetched my Harriers and put them on the trail, for when we returned the stag had disappeared.

Cheetle have a habit of running in a circle, and as they are very "soft" conditioned animals getting pumped very quickly, they invariably head for water. In this case, the trail led away in a direction in which we knew there was no water, while to the right of it, at the base of a small hill, was a deep pool, so, while the dogs burst away on the trail we ourselves "ran cunning" and made for the hill in question and there waited. Nor were we wrong, for we had scarcely been there ten minutes when we again heard the music of the dogs, which grew louder and louder as they approached us. Soon we heard the clatter of hoofs on the stony ground, and out burst a beautiful stag cheetle, who with lolling tongue and labouring flanks, passed within ten yards of the spot where we were hiding. Not far behind were the dogs, all well together and in full song, which increased, when we cheered them frantically as they passed; a truly beautiful and stirring sight, as they streamed along the trail after the stag, eventually bringing him to bay in the very pool we had anticipated. In the meanwhile, we legged it over the shoulder of the hill and down the other side, as fast as we could; a little bit too fast in fact for W.K., for, failing to check his impetus

in time, he went flop over on top of the stag in the pool below, but rising heroically to the occasion, as if his gyration had been a part of his programme, he drew his knife instantly and spitted the stag in the throat as he rushed by him, severing the jugular vein in doing so.

The whole thing was so comical that I simply lay on the top of the bank and roared with laughter, while W. K. squelched about indignantly, trying to persuade me into believing that he had done it all on purpose.

On another occasion, I lassoed a stag cheetle and took him alive. I was camped one day near the Sausar dak-bungalow, on the high road between Chindwara and Nagpur. My dogs were being led about for a walk on the outskirts of the camp, while I was enjoying a tub in my tent. Suddenly, I heard a great uproar among the dogs, and on looking out of my bathroom door, I saw a large stag cheetle, coolly cantering by within a hundred yards of our camp. The dogs had spotted him and were pulling the men off their feet in their efforts to break away, so I shouted for them to be let loose. Pulling on my necessities only and a pair of boots, I dashed after the dogs, with half the camp at my heels, though some of them had already preceded me. I soon overtook them, and in time we found the stag bailed up in a deep pool of water. As we came up, some of the dogs got up on to the bank above, and launched themselves on to the stag below, but the poor beast seemed to be rooted to the spot with terror, and did not move, so I made a slipknot at the end of a rope, which one of the men had brought with him, and threw it over his horns and drew it taut. Then, when too late, he commenced to plunge frantically about in the water. I now had a "fish" on my line with a vengeance, and he would have pulled me off my feet had I not taken the precaution of giving the rope a turn round a sapling. Finally, we secured him alive. By this time my excitement had cooled down, and the resignation of the noble animal, as he lay bound, was so pitiful to see, that I could not bear the idea of the poor beast being done to death in cold blood. A man was standing by with a drawn knife, waiting for my nod to *halal* (cut its throat) it, but I took the knife from him and, after having had the dogs taken away out of sight, I stepped forward and severed the bonds







that bound him, jumping aside as I did so. He immediately sprang to his feet and dashed away out of sight among the bushes, going, no doubt, to rejoin his harem of spotted beauties, whom he knew he would find under the dense cover, perhaps, of some "Achar" tree on the neighbouring hill top, and many a happy day may he roam in their company and enjoy the delights and beauties of his sylvan haunts. My men were much disgusted; but I felt happier for the rest of the day, all the same.

Cheetle, when found on suitable ground for riding, are very easily run down on horseback and speared, for, as I said before, they are very short-winded and soon get pumped. It is then that their peculiar habit of running in circles becomes more evident. I have frequently run down on horseback and speared both cheetle and hog-deer, but they afford poor sport; though the latter little beast is said to charge sometimes, I have never experienced it.

Regarding neilgai, I soon learnt not to put my dogs after them, for they are as clever with their hind feet as a doe sambar is with her fore, and rarely misjudge their aim or distance. A dog that comes within reach of a kick from those hind feet rarely escapes alive. I had a favourite dog, called Snow, killed in this manner on 12th May 1886, at camp Peepla in the Chindwara district.

When pressed hard on horseback, a bull neilgai nearly always charges, but it is usually only well acted bluff on their part, for they generally swerve, on arriving within reaching distance of the spear point, except in the case of very old bulls, who often charge straight home, in the most determined manner, knocking both horse and man clean over, if they do not succeed in dodging him, which a horse will usually do by instinct and on his own initiative, in a most clever manner. But having charged, they pass on to make good their escape, and do not return to the charge, unless pressed again.

At least this has been my experience, though, from what I know of the nature of these animals, I quite believe they are capable, in the case of a particularly vicious old bull, of returning to gore an overthrown victim, or even one they had missed; but in such cases I think they would charge the would-be aggressor at sight, without first trying to run away at all. I have frequently both shot and speared them from horseback, and many a narrow shave have I had

in doing so, my horse once being badly gored in the chest and knocked over by a charging bull in the Wurdah district

Neilgai are easily overhauled by a good horse, provided they are hustled from the beginning and blown, before they gain their "second wind"; but once the latter is gained, it is useless to go on in the hope of tiring them out, for they are much more enduring in a long run than a horse, who has a weight to carry. But these animals are, as a rule, much more difficult to find on rideable ground in the Central Provinces than in some other parts of India. Though essentially a plains-loving animal, for they are rarely found far from



A BULL NEILGAI AND A BLACK BUCK

them in which they roam all night, they retire at daybreak to the densest cover they can find, which, in the Central Provinces, is usually a forest, where it is generally impossible to ride them. But in other parts of India, such as in the United Provinces, large numbers of them may be found hundreds of miles from any forest. In such places they retire during the day into the dense cover of sugarcane fields, or in dense patches of grass, or else in the *jhanu* growing on the banks of rivers.

When in such isolated cover, they can easily be beaten out and forced to take across the open country for the next cover, which may be several miles away, when sportsmen can ride them down and either spear or shoot them from horseback, though I agree with Sterndale that the former is the more sportsmanlike method. My son speared a number of these animals in this manner in the Azimgarh

district, U. P., in 1903, and melting down their marrow sent it, in hermetically sealed bottles, to us in Dehra Doon, which we much enjoyed, for though I have roamed the Doon jungles for years, I have never come across neilghai *in* the Doon, though a few may be found on the further side of the Sewaliks, in the forest bordering on the plains at Saharanpur.

In reference to antelope, such as the black buck, I cannot say I have had much experience in hunting them with dogs, when unwounded. In the first place, their pace is tremendous and I never



had a dog that could overtake one on fair ground ; while secondly, they invariably, when chased, mingle in time with large herds of others of their own species, and are invariably lost in the confusion thus caused ; the same way, in fact, as in the case of cheetle, when there are large numbers of them about. But, on the other hand, I have frequently run them down when unwounded and shot them from horseback, though I have never been able to get within spear's length of them in this manner. The reason for this is that, when chased in this way, antelope, knowing full well that they can at all times keep out of your immediate reach, look upon the chase as a bit of fun, and when once they have settled down to a steady canter, they keep at the same distance from the pursuer, generally only

about twenty yards, if he is going fast ; being joined every now and again by other solitary bucks, until after a few miles' run, the hunter will find himself chasing quite a little herd of perhaps five or six bucks, where he only started after one ; the others apparently having joined in simply for a run and the enjoyment of being chased. The new-comers also keep at about the same distance from the pursuer and now is the hunter's opportunity to make a pretty shot, right and left, with his carbine or pistol, as the case may be, if he be skilful enough and has had sufficient practice at this kind of shooting. It is no earthly use trying to *aim* under these conditions, for if you do,



your weapon, with the rise and fall of your horse, will be pointed harmlessly either into the air or into the ground, when you fire ; the reason for this being that the muscles cannot respond to the brain quickly enough as the aim crosses the object. The only remedy is a snapshot, judging the time, in the rise and fall of your horse, as you do so. Like everything else, this kind of shooting is a knack which may be acquired with practice, often acquired suddenly, as in snipe-shooting.

But however good a shot he may be, the sportsman will find a buck, even at only twenty yards, quite small enough a mark, when he himself is going full tilt on horseback. Regarding the peculiarity of other bucks in joining in on the way, and accompanying another buck who is being pursued, I have seen it occur scores of times,

more often when the pursued buck is wounded, or otherwise distressed. The latter fact inclines me to think that they are prompted to this action, at first by instinct, in order to draw off the attention of the hunter from their more distressed comrade, but seeing that neither he nor they are in any immediate danger of being overtaken by the pursuer, they seem to enter into the fun of making a fool of him, which they show by their frequent gambols as they go along. People who have kept tame antelopes must have frequently noticed this trait in their pets, when the latter, as they habitually do, deliberately entice dogs to chase them, delighting in the exercise and in the fact that they are making fools of the dogs.



EVENTIDE.  
(*Chinkara on the bolt*)

On one occasion, in the Bilaspur district, I wounded a black buck, and after having marked him into a patch of grass, I was obliged to give up the chase for the time being on account of darkness. I was on a short but rapid tour at the time, and had left my hounds at head-quarters, only bringing with me a little terrier to serve as a watchdog at night. Next morning, I returned on horseback, bringing the terrier with me, for I knew it would be almost impossible to find the buck in the dense grass, without his aid ; for wounded

buck will lie as close as a hare, in such cover. The terrier, however, soon forced him out on to the open ploughed fields beyond. The buck, though somewhat stiff at first, had greatly recovered during the night, for his wound had only been a slight one. But hoping to be able to run him down eventually, I gave chase on my horse, and soon passed the little dog, who pluckily toiled along behind in spite of being half choked by the dust which lay a foot deep on the fields.

On seeing me coming, the buck made off at a tremendous pace, but soon settled down into a steady canter, always keeping at a distance of about twenty yards ahead of me, except when I attempted to overtake him by a spurt, when away he would go on again, leaving



CHINK AND BLACK BUCK HERDING TOGETHER

me, figuratively "standing still," until his panic died down, when we would again resume our former distance from each other. After a mile, a red buck came tearing down from the right and joined him, and the two kept together thus for half a mile, when two more black buck joined them, while in the next two miles two more added themselves to the number. It was not that we had accidentally run into them, for they came deliberately from the sides of the course in order to join in the fun, some of whom I saw coming from a distance of several hundred yards from the course.

I now had a herd of six bucks, gambolling about in front of me as they went, to show, I suppose, their contempt for me and my horse. I tried several shots, but as I was using a long rifle, I missed every

time, and on each occasion the new-comers shot away in all directions, like fish in a pool when a pebble is thrown in, while the wounded one pounded stolidly on straight ahead ; but the remainder invariably circled round and rejoined the wounded buck further on. When the latter began to show signs of distress, one or the other of them frequently rushed at him from behind and butted him, evidently with the intention of urging him on. But my horse was also becoming distressed, so having arrived in fairly open country, where it was difficult for the wounded buck to hide, I drew up, in



"TICKER"

order to give him a chance of lying down, which I knew he would do if I gave him the opportunity. Nor was I mistaken, for after going another three hundred yards, all six bucks halted to stare at me, and then the wounded one lay down. Seeing this, I dismounted and commenced to edge towards them, upon which, four out of the five of the new-comers quietly trotted away across a small dip and stood staring at me from the further side. But the fifth buck gallantly stayed by his wounded comrade, butting him vigorously in his efforts to make him get up, looking up anxiously in my direction every now and again, and then renewing his heroic endeavours. He was still at it, when I arrived within a hundred yards, and settled the question by putting a bullet into the neck of the wounded buck, and could easily have bagged his chivalrous companion also, but if ever a being deserved the Victoria Cross, that buck did, and I allowed him to go unharmed.



Black buck have very sharp horns, and know how to use them with disastrous effect when bailed up by dogs. I have had several killed in this manner, among whom was Gaylad, one of the best Harriers in the group shown in Chapter 28, and also the half-bred bulldog named Tiger.



A PORTION OF THE CHINDWARA PACK

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### TALLY HO.

The longest and fastest run, without a check from start to finish, that I have had after a fox in India was one of thirty-five minutes. This was in Seoni with a pack of fifteen couple of Harriers, which I bred myself from imported dogs, some of them being a third generation born *in India*. This does not look as if English dogs "lose their noses after their first season in India" to the extent of being thereafter useless, as seems to be the fashion to make out nowadays.

I have also seen it in print, in reference to the indigenous dogs of India, that "no indigenous breeds run by scent". How about the jungle dog? Until the advent of modern civilization in India, India, was for the most part, a country of dense primeval forests, so

that no canine that did not hunt by scent, could possibly have existed in the country to be procreators of the present wolves, jackals, foxes and *dholes*. If it was written that no indigenous breeds run by sight in a country where, in former times at any rate, they could not see more than ten yards ahead of them, it would be more to the point.

Because the domestic Indian pariah dog (though he is in most cases a cross between a jackal and wolf) under artificial circumstances as a scavenger, has allowed his faculty of hunting live game by scent to fall into disuse, finding it easier to live by scavenging round a village than by hunting, it does not prove that his nose has been spoilt by the "climate". The change, if any, in this respect is due to his artificial circumstances and surroundings.

The latter, in my opinion, is also the cause, though in a different way, when deterioration occurs in imported English dogs in India where the climatic and other conditions are totally different to those of their native land. This is the mistake that is generally made in India in regard to imported hounds, in that they are generally treated in India in the same manner as in England. The quality and quantity of their food and drink, and their hours of feeding, which were good enough for them in their native country, often become improper when adhered to in India, with the result that their constitutions soon become undermined, causing various diseases and consequent impairment of their faculties.

The confined kennels, which were good enough in the atmosphere of their own lands, in India are not sufficiently ventilated, and consequently become very foul, and soon ruin their powers of scent. Thus it is in India that the loss of hunting faculties in imported and country-bred hounds is due chiefly to the failure on the part of their masters to adapt their treatment to the change in their natural circumstances, but who lay the blame of their own carelessness and want of thought on the "climate". These were the conclusions which I came to while I officiated (for two years) in the capacity of "whip" to one of the largest hunts (fox-hounds) in India, whereby I greatly profited when I became the master of a pack of hounds of my own.

I kept my hounds in large, airy, open stables, which were kept at all times scrupulously clean and, above all, dry ; which were artificially

cooled in the hot seasons, when also particular care was taken to keep a constant supply of cool, fresh water always by the dogs ; and artificially dried during the rainy seasons, when also particular care was taken to admit plenty of air and light. In this manner, I rarely found any deterioration to occur in the hunting faculties of my hounds, more than would occasionally occur even in the land of their origin, even after five and six years spent in India. Thus cared for, my Harriers preserved all their natural faculties of scent, wind and limb throughout their natural lives in India without any deterioration, and hunted up to the last as well as ever I could have wished.

Though it is not my intention here to enter into a discussion as to the medical treatment of dogs in India, I will yet give a few notes in passing, which might be of use.

If fresh pine-tree shavings are used as bedding, there will not be a single flea on the dog, the turpentine in the pine keeps off fleas. At the commencement of the hot-weather, at once change the food of the dogs to a less heating diet, such as rice and milk ; this wards off many diseases which occur at this time of the year. Feed dogs at sundown, and with a light breakfast only in the morning. If *chapatees* are given, insist on the sweeper producing at least twelve *well baked chapatees* to the seer (six to the pound) of flour, or they will give the dogs very thick quarter-baked slabs of dough, which will soon ruin a dog's digestion. During the ten days preceding the birth of pups, the bitch should be twice dosed with areca-nut powder ; this will prevent the pups being *born* with worms as so often happens. Worms are the causes of other diseases also, so their appearance must be checked ; and, when two months old, dose the pups from time to time with *small* doses of areca.

Draughts are very dangerous to dogs, so take every precaution to prevent all draughts from reaching the dogs in a kennel, though it must be kept well ventilated otherwise.

When a dog gets ill put into a well ventilated room by itself, disturb it *as little as possible*, and keep it very quiet.

In the generality of cases, when a dog is taken ill in India, *more than one* organ will be affected simultaneously ; this does not appear to be generally realized and provided for, so that in treating for

one organ only, such as the liver, the other affected organs are neglected, and the dog is lost.

Among the numerous *post-mortem* examinations on dogs held by me, I have frequently found, I might say in the majority of cases, that the following organs were simultaneously affected :—

1. The lungs, or pleura, sometimes both, with pneumonia or pleurisy.
2. Liver congested.
3. Kidneys congested.
4. Bowels inflamed ; perhaps with worms. Stomach generally being normal.

For this common disease, whatever name it may go by, I treat as follows, giving four different kinds of medicines at different times in the same day :—

1. Castor oil to act on the liver—alternately with areca if there are worms.
2. Nitre, to act on the kidneys.
3. Ammoniated quinine for the lungs.
4. Quinine powder to keep down the fever.

As diet, make up one dessert-spoonful of Mellin's Food in half a cup of hot water : to which add half a breakfast cup of barley water made with half a tea-spoon of "Robinson's Patent Barley." Mix together and when *luke warm* mix in the raw white of an egg (not beaten with a fork but cut with a pair of scissors, if the dog is to be spoon-fed).

The above is very sustaining, soothing and easily retained, and may be given four times a day ; the raw yolk of an egg may be added too and given twice a day, when the dog is convalescent, not before.

Do not give any milk whatever, until quite convalescent, for it makes them bilious, or "turns" and makes them sick.

Thus, for a small dog, say a terrier, give as follows :—

- (1) 6 A.M.—4 dessert-spoons castor oil, or one tea-spoon of areca.
- (2) 7 A.M.— $\frac{3}{4}$  cup warm Mellin's Food mixture, and three-grain pill of quinine.
- (3) 10 A.M.—20 drops of nitre in water.
- (4) 12 noon.— $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Mellin's or chicken soup and three-grain pill of quinine.

- (5) 4 P.M.— $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Mellin's Food mixture.
- (6) 8 P.M.— $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Mellin's Food mixture or chicken soup.
- (7) 9 P.M.—a tea-spoon of ammoniated quinine in water.

The fever generally commences about 10 A.M., and goes off in the evening, when the lungs must be protected, hence the ammoniated quinine in the evening, and cover well.

For a larger sized dog, the doses should be increased in proportion accordingly. If the dog is very weak and the fever continues during the night, the same treatment must also be continued throughout the night. The remedies are very simple, but very effective.

For distemper there is no medicine that comes within miles of Rackham and Co.'s (Norwich) "Distemper Balls" which can be got from any chemist. They are an almost infallible cure for distemper, and can also be safely given to a dog when it begins to ail, and no matter what the ailment may be, it almost invariably checks the threatened attack. It is by far the best "all-round" medicine for dogs that I know, while Rackham's worm-balls are also excellent.

However, as I remarked before, this is not a medical treatise, so I will call a halt on this subject.

The popular substitute in India for English fox-hunting is by means of what is termed a "bobbery-pack," which is usually a pack of mongrels of all sorts and conditions, partly scent-hunters and partly runners of the gaze-hound type. The reason the latter are usually considered necessary is that people are too lazy to appear in time on the scene before the dew has dried and leaves the ground too dry to hold enough scent to enable their indifferent scent-hunters to follow the trail, so that their only hope then lies with gaze-hounds who hold up the quarry in some patch of cover until the scent-hunters come up and turn him out, to be caught in the open by the runners.

Personally, however, except under special circumstances I never permitted my gaze-hounds to interfere with the operations of my pack of Harriers when hunting a fox or a jack. I made it a point to arrive on the scene of the hunt at daybreak, just at the sun was about to appear on the horizon. The scene, of course, was always a specially chosen one, its chief qualification being, as far as possible, the absence of holes in the neighbourhood into which the quarry

might run to earth, frequently all such holes having been searched for and previously blocked up by men sent out overnight for the purpose. Thus, finding each and every hole in the neighbourhood blocked up, the jack or fox, as the case may be, generally puts up for the day in some patch of grass or other cover near by.

The winter of course is the season *par excellence* for hunting in India ; the dew then lies heavy and long on the ground, holding a perfect scent, while the weather is delightfully exhilarating to both man and beast.

On arriving at the scene, we spend perhaps some ten minutes in casting round before the hounds discover and finally settle down on the proper trail ; in the meanwhile, the quarry has become aware of the presence of the hounds and, in consequence, has quietly sneaked off from the further end of the cover with a start of ten minutes, and is putting as much distance as he deems necessary between himself and the enemies, who his instinct tells him may follow him up.

But a jack is a great sluggard, for though his instinct may warn him, to a certain extent, of his danger from the hounds, he is not accustomed to being hunted systematically by a persisting scent-hunting pack, so he takes matters easy, and is as likely as not to hang up again in some adjoining cover, until he hears the music of the pursuing hounds.

Then the fun begins in earnest, as the Harriers burst out of the cover in a compact body with a glorious burst of music, with the jack in sight in the open, perhaps only four hundred yards away.

Harriers are not fast dogs, but, for this very reason, give us all the more fun ; while the jack is still in full possession of his wind, so that at first he shows the hounds more or less a clean pair of heels. But the business is only commencing.

Mr. Jack disappears into a depression, turns off abruptly at right-angles, keeping along under its cover for about half a mile ; then into a deep ravine, down the bed of which he will proceed for some distance, then up the further bank, and across a piece of open country beyond, and in again into a branch of the same ravine.

In the meanwhile, we are keeping well up with our hounds, but on reaching the ravine we are in difficulties. But we manage

o scramble in and out again on to the further side somehow, the music of the hounds, in the meanwhile, having receded further and further away from us ; so that by the time we emerge on the top of the further bank, we are only just in time to see the last of the pack disappearing down the other branch of the ravine.

On seeing this, however, an idea suddenly flashes across our brain, so we hastily turn our horses round and quickly scramble back the way we have just come, and then quietly trot along the banks of the ravine to our left, keeping a sharp look-out ahead in the direction leading to our starting point. Suddenly, we see what we are looking for, as the cunning old jack bursts out of the ravine scarcely a hundred yards in front of us and heads straight across the plain in the direction of the cover from whence he started, obviously with the object of doubling on his own tracks, and so perhaps confuse his relentless pursuers.

We at once " lift " our hounds, with our yodels, who understanding the meaning of it well, at once take a short cut across to us, thus saving themselves several hundred yards of awkward twists and turns in the ravines.

The strain of the pace is now beginning to tell on the old jack, for he has not been allowed a moment's rest from the start, he realizes that running alone is of no avail, so he must again resort to strategem. He now again enters another depression which hides him from his pursuers, through which also runs a wide and very dusty road. Here at last is an opportunity for bringing off another trick, perhaps successfully this time ; so away he dashes straight down the middle of the dusty road for several hundred yards, until he no longer dare delay seeking the shelter of the scrub that is now close by, for fear of being seen by his pursuers before he gets out of sight behind the cover.

On reaching the roadway, as the old jack had calculated, the hounds are at once thrown out, for the soft dry dust holds no scent. The younger dogs at once scatter in various directions to try and pick up the scent again, but the older dogs look up into the faces of their human companions for guidance. So we canter down the roadway with the older dogs on either side of the road.



In the meanwhile, we hear a hue and cry behind us, and on looking round we see that the remainder of the pack are off, and ahead of them we see a jack, but a glance tells us that he is not the one we are after; for he has an unmistakeable jaunty and fresh appearance, which is quite different to the exhausted and bedraggled appearance of our first friend when we last saw him disappear only a few minutes ago. So we have to dash across and whip the dogs off the trail of the new jack and bring them to heel in order to look for the proper trail.

Ten minutes are thus lost before we are finally off again on a steady scent, so that it is some time before we again come in sight of our original quarry, as he pounds wearily across a piece of open country some three hundred yards ahead of us. He is now obviously well cooked, so we gain rapidly on him, and soon the old jack is obliged to resort to jinking the leading hounds, in order to add another few brief moments to his life. But all is over now, for the hounds spread out on either side, as he jinks one successfully, he runs almost into the jaws of another; he has several hair-breadth escapes in this manner, when suddenly he tumbles over stone dead, before one of the dogs, or even any of them, have touched him, apparently from failure of the heart, due to the excessive and unusual exercise. The dog behind him stops dead in astonishment, but after a moment catches hold of him, only to drop him again immediately when he finds that the beast is dead, a few other dogs do the same and drop him, for a jackal for some reason is very repulsive to good hounds, who, in consequence, refuse to touch him after he is dead, though they are ready enough to kill him but even then make wry faces as if the taste of him was repulsive to them, the reason apparently being that, when hard pressed in this manner, jackals emit a very pungent excretion which is repulsive to even the human nose.

The dogs now throw themselves down on the ground in various attitudes with lolling tongues and panting flanks, getting up now and again to fawn against their master and looking up into his face with twinkling eyes and smiling ears—for it is with the ears that a dog smiles—as if in mutual congratulation over the success of the run.

We dismount and, having loosened the girths of our horses and patted their necks, we proceed to pet and talk to our dogs ; after which we sit down and light our pipes and continue our discussion of the run at our ease.

When all have been sufficiently rested, before moving on again, we draw our hunting knife and sever the jack's tail to be preserved as a trophy, but in doing so we notice a slight quiver pass over the body of the jack, apparently only a death tremor, so we take no further notice of it.

We then mount our horses and call off the dogs with the intention of proceeding homewards, but no sooner have the dogs been drawn off, when, to our utter astonishment, the now tail-less and seemingly dead jackal suddenly jumps to his feet and scurries off. The dogs, however, see him, so that before he has gone a hundred yards he finds it necessary to have a second sudden attack of heart-failure ! We now either put him out of pain by finally knocking him on the head, or leave him to escape with the life he has so cleverly earned, never to be hunted again by us, for he will carry his warrant of immunity on his beam end for the remainder of his days.

The above is a perfectly true incident, which my son, who was present at the time, can also vouch for.

Jackals are the most inveterate shamers when finally run down after a long and exhausting run, during which they have plenty of time to think out some cunning trick, such as this. In a short sharp run with greyhounds, the matter is all over too quickly. But at the end of a long and tedious run, I have very often known them to sham death in this way, even to, in the case already mentioned, permitting his tail being cut off. However, at a moment like this when the dreadful hounds are all around and the fear of death is on him, the chaos of his mental and physical state must be such that he would scarcely feel the comparatively slight pain of a sharp knife as it whips off his tail.

On another occasion we "killed" within a few hundred yards of a road, along which my wife happened to be driving at the time in a tonga ; so I caught the apparently dead jack by the tail and commenced to drag it along the ground, with the intention of

showing it to my wife. The jack, however, was again only shamming death, for in jumping a ditch the head of the jack apparently got an extra hard bump, which he resented by turning round suddenly and biting me clean through my boot, and then had the impudence to go on shamming death as if he had not done anything. My wife was very disturbed by the incident for fear there might be something wrong with the jack, and insisted on sucking the wound in my foot which was bleeding, though I felt certain that a jack that had the sense to sham death to this extent was anything but mad !

Hunting the perky little Indian fox is a very different matter to hunting jackals, and much more fun. These little animals are gifted with most extraordinary speed, which at first can generally easily distance the fastest of greyhounds. But they are short of wind and staying powers if pressed long enough, and then they give an exquisite display of their perfectly marvellous jinking powers, which is very pretty, if somewhat cruel, to watch.

A jackal being a comparatively slow animal, I made it a rule to give him about ten minutes start, if possible, so as to prolong the run, otherwise the hounds were apt to catch him too quickly. With a fox it was quite different, so we would get on to him as soon as possible, when the run would be fast and furious from the very start. For this reason one horseman, if possible, would be posted at the further end of the cover that was being drawn by the hounds ; who, if a jack turned out, would let him go so as to give him a start ; but if a fox broke cover, he would at once cry out frantically and so "lift" the hounds on to the trail.

My son, whom I had taught to ride to hounds with me ever since he was eight years of age, was usually my companion in the days of which I am now speaking. I was afraid to let the little chap ride with stirrups, for fear he might be thrown and dragged by them at some time when I did not happen to be in sight ; even a saddle was discarded, only a horse-rug being strapped on his pony with a girth. In this manner he accompanied me in hundreds of runs without coming to any serious grief, the worst accident he ever met being on an occasion when his pony "savaged" him, biting him severely across the ribs.

In this manner, while I was drawing a piece of cover with the hounds, my little son would be standing sentry at the further end. The moment a fox broke cover, he would scurry away after it across the plain screaming with all his might. The hounds soon got to know the meaning of the childish voice ahead of them, and would pour out of the cover in his wake, and at the end of about a mile would commence to gain rapidly on the fox who was then fast becoming exhausted.

However, the gallant little beast still has it in him to make at least two or three astonishing spurts, leaving the hounds easily far behind. But the hounds gradually draw up to him again each time, till there are no more spurts, and then the little fox is obliged to resort to jinking the leading hounds, which he does with the greatest of ease, delaying the jink till the very last moment, so that the baffled hounds go rolling head over heels over each other, while the little fox goes off free for a space with his brush held high perpendicularly to his body, as if he was proud of his feat and looks as if he were merely playing with the dogs. In this manner he will frequently jink the whole pack by a single jink, and gain a clear forty or sixty yards before the pack is able to turn and head again in the right direction. In this manner he will fool the hounds ten or a dozen times before he finally gets so exhausted as to lose his wits, and then, making a false jink, he falls straight into the jaws of one of the numerous hounds that are now on all sides of him. From the very start, and up to the last few seconds when he loses his head, the little animal appears as if he himself were thoroughly entering into the spirit of the fun, and was enjoying the opportunities of fooling the dogs, and I really believe he does enjoy it for a greater portion of the time. A bright, honest, straightforward little fellow, with none of the proverbial "cunning of the fox" in his composition.

In their last moments I have known them to deliberately commit suicide by jumping down a well. On one occasion I was only in the nick of time, by dashing in between my hounds and a well into which the fox had jumped, to save the dogs from following a fox in a mass into the well.

These blind wells, which are frequently dotted all over the country in most unexpected places, are a constant source of danger to the

unwary rider in India. They are generally temporary wells often not more than ten or twelve feet deep, built by the careless native and left quite unprotected, veritable death-traps when screened, as they often are, by a fringe of grass or bushes growing round the edge. Many a time my horse has saved both himself and me by bucking over such a well, unexpectedly come upon at full gallop. Dogs, too, are frequently lost by tumbling into such places unknown to any one and consequently never seen or heard of again.

Thus, with unprotected wells, deep ravines or *burkhas*, *nallas* and patches of black cotton soil where the country may be marked like a chess-board with cracks and with holes the size of a room, we have quite as much and more of the spice of danger in hunting to hounds in India as at Home.



A MORNING'S BAG WITH DOGS

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### SMALL GAME SHOOTING.

A dog, being so low down with his face only a few inches above the ground, where he, moreover, gets little or nothing of any breeze that may be blowing, feels the refraction of the heat of the sun from the ground a very great deal more than does his human companion whose face is at least five feet above the ground-refraction, as well as obtaining the full benefit of the breeze at that height. These facts are only too often forgotten by the masters of dogs; who, because they themselves are feeling quite cool and comfortable at their height in the breeze, continue to work their poor dogs in the Indian sun till they are quite stupefied by the heat at their level and then, because their dogs get ill after this thoughtless treatment, they say that dogs are no use after their first season in India and that they "lose their noses," etc., etc.

In India, the early morning and the evening are the only times at which dogs should be hunted at any kind of game. At these times the game are more lively and are more on the move, and so leave many more scent-trails for the dogs to pick up and follow. The

morning of course is the best time, before the dew on the ground has dried up, for the damp on the ground will then hold a strong scent, which it will be impossible for good dogs to miss.

There are very few men, comparatively speaking, who go in systematically for small-game shooting with dogs. If people only knew what a lot of splendid fun they are missing by not using dogs for ground-game, a great many more men would go in for it. Personally, I really do not know what I should do with myself now, especially at my present age, were it not for my dogs.

There are very few places in India, I should imagine, where there are no ground-game, and if the thousands of officials who have to spend a large portion of the year out in camp, instead of spending their time, after their day's work is done, decrying their lot, only took out a few decently-trained dogs into the scrub grass or fields in the neighbourhood of their camp, of a morning and evening, they would not only keep much better health, both physically and mentally, but would find a much more cheery outlook and interest in life, in the ever-varying and pleasant recreation thus obtained.

For ground-game, I prefer good spaniels or retrievers. Not more than at most three dogs should be loose at the same time, or they will excite each other too much and so become "wild," and by ranging too far will put up the game out of the reach of the gun. To me it is a great pleasure to *see* good dogs working, even if I do not shoot anything, for which reason I prefer working over more or less open covers; we can then see the actions of each dog and note the way they regularly play up to each other, and will have ample warning the moment when game has been scented.

The Indian hare is a small animal, only about half the size of an English hare, and is found more or less plentifully in most open or broken bits of country all over India, if on *usar* country, in the isolated bushes which are usually to be found thereon, being particularly fond of the dark-green milk bush with the long soft thorns; in the fields they are very common among cotton, and in all hedge-rows of grass and bushes. For hare shooting, of which I am particularly fond, I usually use only my dogs, that is to say, without the aid of a line of men, and so obtain much more fun as well as exercise





SMALL-GAME BAG WITH DOGS DURING A CAMP-TO-CAMP  
MARCH



JACK.



JESS.



JILL

DOGS FOR SMALL GAME.

in constantly having to nip round to the various points of vantage for a shot, as my dogs manœuvre the hare between them and finally work it round to me. This form of recreation is a never-tiring source of enjoyment to me and my dogs, year after year ; and it is not an uncommon occurrence to return of a morning with six or eight hares, each one of which has given us its own individual bit of fun and exercise, no two cases being alike, the details of which our memory delights to go over and dwell on in turn, as we wend our way home with our dogs, filled with the warm glow of the healthy and pleasurable exercise and excitement which we have just been through. This is quite a different way of shooting hares, to the usual method of walking them up with a line of men and bowling them over with mechanical regularity as they get up at the shooter's toes, which form of sport very soon palls and gives no excitement at all. It is people who do it on these lines, who are so ready to sneer at hare-shooting and say it is no fun, and I quite agree with them when worked on their methods. But let them go out with only say three or four dogs, and then see if hare-shooting is so dull, that is to say, if they have sufficient energy to run about and enter into the fun with their dogs.

Hares, of course, also give a good deal of fun when coursed with greyhounds ; but the difficulty generally is to find them in a piece of country that is sufficiently open to permit the use of gaze-hounds. Personally, I have found gaze-hounds an intolerable nuisance to keep with spaniels and retrievers, there always being constant ructions and fights between them ; so that men who are fond of hare-shooting over spaniels in the manner mentioned, will be wise to eschew gaze-hounds from their pack.

When run by dogs (or by jackals), hares in India frequently run to ground, or jump up into the hollow of a tree and scramble right up as far as they can ; in fact, they often live in such places. When hunting my dogs in Australia, I invariably ended up at some fallen trunk of a tree, into the hollow of which the hare always took refuge, when an axe and a bag would be brought into play. Some of these Australian hares turned the scales at 13 lbs., which is double the weight of an Indian hare, and a pound more than any English hare I ever weighed.

In broken or raviny country, hares will generally be found in a tuft of grass or bush growing on the highest point of a ridge, or on the face of an almost perpendicular bank, from whence they can watch all the approaches. They are very fond of their "forms," and will invariably be found again at the same place on the next day. Hares depend a great deal on their sense of hearing to warn them of the approach of danger, and for this reason they will never lie under a "noisy" bush, that is to say, in a bush that has stiff broad leaves as the *palas* or *dak*, which make such a noisy rustling in the wind that under them they would be unable to hear anything else. So do not expect to find many hares in a *dak* jungle.

There is no particular time for breeding with hares that I know of, for I have found their young at every season of the year. At certain times an old male or "jack" hare has a very strong and musty scent about him, at which times he is quite unfit to eat. People sometimes strike across an old hare in this state, and there and then condemn all hares ever afterwards as unfit to eat, and obstinately scoff at all suggestions to the contrary. This is a great mistake. There is also a certain peculiarity in the treatment for the table; a hare should be hung with the skin *on*, if the skin is first taken off and body then hung, it will dry up; if properly treated, hares are very nice either jugged, boiled, stewed, or curried, and also make very good soups. With some people it is a prejudice formed on a single instance, but I have frequently served such guests at my table with hares done up in the above ways, unknown to them, and they have enjoyed the dish thoroughly, though nothing would have induced these people to touch the dish had they known what it was. I was once taken in myself in this manner, when a host served me with a delicious "duck-curry" which I enjoyed immensely, to learn after the meal was over that I had eaten and enjoyed a curry made of flying-foxes! But after all it is only the looks of the latter beast that are against it, for it is a perfectly clean feeder, living on nothing but fruit and leaves. Last Christmas, I served a guest with some pea-fowl that had been roasted with bacon and good stuffing, which he enjoyed so much (under the impression that it was turkey) that he particularly asked for a second helping, excusing himself on the plea that it was "so nice," but on remarking to him, as I handed him

his second helping, that is was not turkey but pea-fowl, he laid down his knife and fork and left his second helping untouched, and I felt inclined to rate him for being so prejudiced.

Hares are perfectly clean feeders at all times, but I never shoot partridges or pea-fowl anywhere in the neighbourhood of villages. But if it comes to that, what is a more unclean feeder than the ordinary domestic fowl or duck ; even sheep I have, time after time, seen gobbling up offal with relish. If people do not hesitate to eat these domestic animals and birds every day of their lives, to say nothing of what comes from "Chicago," it is unreasonable on their part to turn up their noses at wild game who have practically no opportunity to indulge in depraved appetites.

Partridge and quail shooting is quite a different matter to hare-shooting, and they must be "walked up" in the orthodox way, so I always use a line of at least three or four men to aid me and my dogs.

The ordinary grey quail (of which the hen is the larger bird) arrives about the beginning of December and leaves again about the middle of March, when the crops have been cut in the plains. The crops being out later in the season in the Hills, the quails go up in swarms on to the lower slopes of the Himalayas in March and April. They give very pretty and quick, if somewhat easy, shooting when we have got our "eye in" at them. I generally use only half charges at quail, both in powder and shot, filling up the space between the wads with the saw-dust ; this is quite sufficient for quail, who generally afford close shooting, and saves a lot of unnecessary noise and headaches. Quail-shooting should be done early in the morning ; for they are difficult to put up when the heat is strong, then there is also very little scent, and it is more distressing for the dogs.

The little "bush-quail" is hardly worth shooting for sport, for their flight is very short and low, besides being very tiny-bodied. They are generally flushed, a whole family together, from a bush, out of which they rise simultaneously with a startling whirr as they scatter in all directions, uttering shrill little cries as they fly. On the ground they look like mice, as they run along in a crouching attitude. I once saw a family of them run in this manner into a

small bush, the size of my hat, and on firing into it with number ten shot, though I could not see a single bird at the time of firing, I picked up twelve birds.

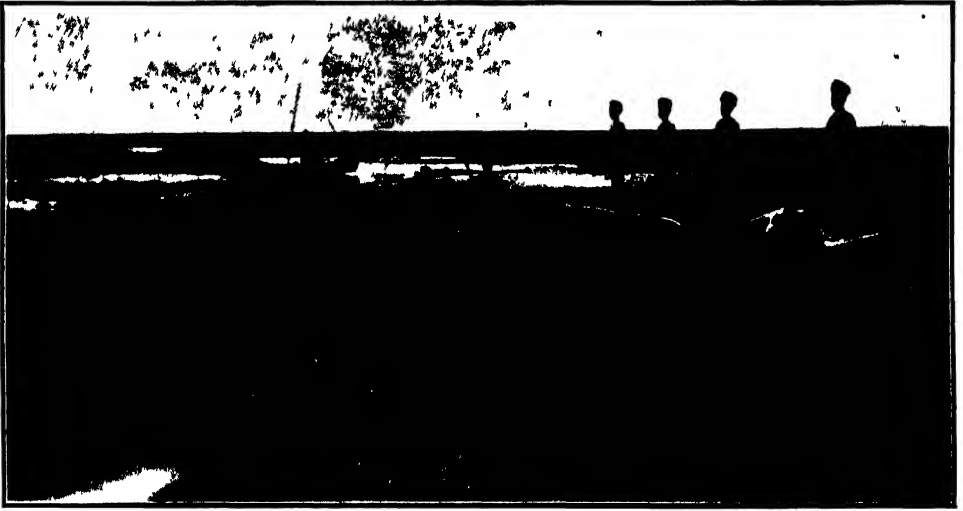
Grey quail always come in with the full-moon, and do all their travelling by moon-light. If a decoy-quail is picketted in a wheat-field on a moon-light night, that field will generally be found full of quail in the morning. Quails are also fond of damp ground, such as the neighbourhood of a snipe *jheel*, or the bed of a dry tank.

In the commencement of the rainy season, when no other kind of shooting is to be had, we can have some fun with the "rain-quail," and also with a smaller kind of grey quail, the male of which has a band of black across the breast.

Unlike the partridge in England, the grey partridge in India always roosts in trees or bushes at night, hence he will never be found where there are no such bushes about for him to rest on. Nor are they found in large coveys as in England, but in "family" parties of generally five and six together. They lie generally very close and often do not rise till almost trodden on. On rising from a bush they generally, at first, mount straight into the air for about twenty feet and then go straight away very strongly, with perhaps a slightly curved flight, but with no twisting. They are hardy birds and often take a deal of killing, and a great deal more in recovering, for if not killed dead, they invariably run, often going many hundreds of yards, so that without good dogs their recovery in such cases is a hopeless matter. These birds, also, many people affect to dislike, saying they are tough and tasteless. Of course, they will be tough and tasteless when they are not "hung" sufficiently, nor cooked properly. Boiled partridge, with good bread-sauce and potato-chips, I consider a good enough dish for any true hunter. When hung long enough to be tender and then properly roasted and basted, they are delicious.

Partridges are great fighters, so natives are fond of keeping them in cages for the purpose of making them fight—large wagers often being laid on such birds. Quails also are used in this manner. These fighting birds are taught and excited to call, and are then taken out into the jungles and used to decoy wild partridges into traps laid for them. Their call is a very loud and noisy one,

## JHEEL\_SHOOTING.



In the foreground is a snipe-marsh. In the background on the horizon may be seen the gleam of some seven miles of open water which holds millions of ducks of all kinds, to get within shooting distance of which, without a "Royal-shoot" *bundobust*, is almost impossible.



resembling the words *tea-kettle ! tea-kettle ! tea-kettle ! tea-kettle ! tea-kettle-kak !* said very rapidly five or six times in a high key.

The black-partridge and painted-partridge are very similar to each other, both in appearance and their call ; their call being rendered, by the Hindustani words of "*khuda ! teri-kudrat !*" which means literally "God ! Thy praise !" ; or *shake ! mee-r ! kankar rah !* or *char-r-r ! cha a-a ! char-char-r-r-ah !* The black-partridge however, is a larger and handsomer bird, found only in Upper India ; it is very fond of tall reeds or grass, and also of *j'hau* on the banks of rivers, while in thicker tree jungles it is always to be found among the thorny bushes, particularly the *ber*. They do not squat so much as do the grey-partridge, on becoming aware of the presence of danger, but, if they have time, will leg it for hundreds of yards. When finally flushed, they invariably tower high, straight into the air, before going straight off. They are very soft, easily killed, and are delicious eating.

The painted-partridge is also easily killed, but it does not run so much, nor is it a swamp or reed-partridge in the sense the black is ; it is usually found in the neighbourhood of little hillocks in scrub jungles and fields, and generally in pairs. It has not the chestnut collar on the back of its neck, nor the white bands or spots on the side of the head which the black-partridge has.

In my opinion, without dogs probably about 75 per cent of partridges are generally left behind by sportsmen owing to the habit, which all partridges have, of squatting sooner or later when driven.

The only partridges in India that I know who associate together in large coveys, and behave otherwise like partridges at Home, are the *chukor* or hill-partridges found on the Himalayas, a large handsome bird, weighing nearly thirty ounces, which is delicious eating. They are generally found in large coveys on the grassy top or side of some wild and bleak hill, often in most inaccessible places. These birds lie very close, so that the first intimation that the sportsman sometimes gets of their presence, is a startling whirr ! on all sides of him, and in firing at one he will often "brown" a number of others also. But, by the time the shot is fired, they will be in mid-air over a yawning gulf, so that when hit they fall down ! down !



down ! for perhaps half a mile, into some dense thickets below, where, without a dog, it would be like looking for a needle in a hay-stack to try and recover your lost bird, to say nothing of the physical distress and danger of negotiating those awful *khuds* ; whereas if you have a good dog with you, he at once spots the bird falling, and slips quickly down by various winding monkey-tracks where it would be impossible for a human being to follow. In the meanwhile, the sportsman may sit down comfortably and light his pipe and wait ; and in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, his dog will return with the dead *chukor* in his mouth. This is what my dogs have done for me in the Himalayas scores of times.

Similarly, with the Himalayan pheasants, the *manal*, *cheer*, *kaleej* and *kaklass*, I always use dogs for the same purpose, especially in the wilds of Teri and Garhwal, where men for beaters are often not to be had for love or money. All these pheasants are good eating. The *cheer* and the beautiful *manal* are often difficult to get, for they haunt the most inaccessible places, such as the bushes on the face of an overhanging precipice ; they are frequently to be found at the same spot at the same time every day, so that the local villagers soon get to know where they are.

The *kaleej* and *kaklass* are often found at lower levels, especially the *kaleej*, who are often found mixed up indiscriminately with the common red jungle-fowl at the foot of the Himalayas and Sewaliks. The photo given in this chapter, in which game are shown hung against a tent, represents a mixed bag of *kaleej* pheasants and jungle-fowl made in a couple of hours with our dogs in the Sewalik Hills.

To come down to the plains again. Of jungle-fowl there are three kinds, the red jungle-fowl, the silver jungle-fowl and the spur-fowl ; there being two kinds of the latter, the larger kind having sometimes three spurs on each leg, while the smaller kind have only two, one, or occasionally no spurs at all.

The silver or grey jungle-fowl are only found in the southern half of the Indian Peninsula, more or less south of a certain belt formed across the Central Provinces by the districts of Seoni, the north-eastern portion of Chindwara, part, if not whole, of Nagpur, and the whole of Wurdah. Within this peculiar belt there are only

spur-fowl to be found, neither the red nor grey jungle-fowl being present. Speaking roughly, to the north of this line, there are only red jungle-fowl and not a single grey, while to the south of this line they are all grey jungle-fowl with not a single red, and the intervening belt contains neither one nor the other, but only spur-fowls. What the reason is, I believe, no one can say, the nature of the climate and the country, and the character of the jungles being much the same on either side of, as well as within, this curious belt, so that there seems to be nothing to account for this hard-and-fast line which Nature has drawn. The red jungle-fowl is very like the domestic bantam, both in appearance and call, the call of the cock being the usual *kak-karr-kak*! while the hen cackles after laying, or when disturbed, exactly in the same manner as the domestic hen. They are generally found eight or ten or more together, and afford very pretty shooting, being fast on the wing. A few men are always necessary to help the dogs, or else the fowls simply flutter up into the trees, where they remain cackling indignantly at the dogs below.

The grey or silver-hackled cock is a very pretty bird, whose neck feathers are much prized for the purposes of fly-fishing. Its call is different to the red cock, being a prolonged *chick-chok-charr-chok*! The hen is very similar in appearance to the mate of the red cock, which is the same as the ordinary domestic hen. I once captured some chickens in the jungles, and their mother behaved exactly the same as does her domestic sister under similar circumstances, dancing round us with feathers puffed out and pretending to rush at us from time to time, or else trying to entice us away in another direction. These birds, however, never do well in captivity, either dying, or leading a sickly bedraggled existence, which is pitiful to see.

Without dogs, jungle-fowl are very difficult to flush, for, rather than fly, they run as long as possible and then, as a last resource, creep in under masses of *debris* and even into holes in the ground and into the roots of trees, and allow the beaters to pass within a few inches of them without moving.

In regard to pea-fowl in the plains of Upper India, they are so plentiful and tame as to be almost considered more a domestic than a wild bird, so that there is little sport in shooting them. But in jungle tracts they are so shy and wild as to give as much trouble to

stalk as do deer. Once well under way, driven pea-fowl travel at a great pace, far faster in reality to what they appear to be travelling, so that it is not so difficult then to miss them clean, as it would appear to be; when it is also necessary to use large shot, such as No. 2, to bring them down, and even then they may run many hundreds of yards before the dogs finally catch them. They behave exactly the same as do jungle-fowl and give the dogs plenty of the fun they love. When walking them up with dogs, I generally use No. 4 shot and No. 2 shot for them when they are being driven.

Except at the season when pea-fowl have been eating the berries of the *aowla* tree or *ber*, and in the neighbourhood of human habitations, I consider them far superior to the domestic turkey for table purposes, not being so coarse-grained; they make excellent *mayonnaise*, *moli*, curries (chicks especially), grilled-bones, devilled, and are delicious when properly roasted with good stuffing and basted with bacon, not the native-cooks' method of "roasting," *i.e.*, boiled first and browned afterwards.

We will now transfer our glance to more open country; and the largest "small-game" that claims our attention is the Great Indian Bustard, or the Indian ostrich, as it might be called, standing over three feet in height. They are usually found five and six, or singly, at a time, on open sandy or rocky bush-covered country, or among cotton or other tall crops, where they stalk about solemnly snapping at grasshoppers or picking up grain, etc. Their bodies, being mostly of a dun colour, are invisible at a distance, but their long snow-white necks are very conspicuous. The largest males are generally found all alone, on some rocky knoll. Their flight is a slow lobbing movement, which appears to be irksome to them, so that they rarely fly far at a time, rarely going more than a mile before again alighting. Nor can they rise quickly, and invariably have to run a few jumping paces before they can rise on to their wings. On suspecting danger, they usually move off slowly at a dignified walk with their bills held straight up in the air, and if they think they have not been particularly noticed, they generally rather than take to flight, perhaps unnecessarily, try to hide by lying down flat on the ground behind some adjacent obstacle such as a bush, a rock, or a tuft of grass, but at the same time keeping a keen eye on all the movements of the

enemy, so that it is no use to try any of the old dodges of "circling" round to him, or he will be off. So the only thing to do is to get as near as possible to him obliquely, as if you were going to pass him by, and, on reaching the nearest point to him, to rush in towards him ; it will take him some moments to realize what is happening, and then to blunder clumsily to his feet, and then again to run his few necessary paces before he can rise to his wings, by which time the sportsman will have gained forty or fifty yards, which may bring him within reach of an easy shot. Of course, very large shot must be used for so large a bird.



However, all this trouble may be saved if an accurate rifle is used. If the rifle is a small bore and makes only a slight noise, five or six shots may be had at the same bird before he finally gets disgusted at such very bad shooting and takes himself off.

At a place called Burhee, in the Jabbalpur District, while stalking a buck, a solitary old male bustard blundered up in front of me. I sent him sprawling with an explosive bullet in his tail from my rifle, and on weighing him found him to be 29 lbs. in weight. On the same day my son returned to camp from another direction of the same plain with two of the greater bustard, which he had put up and shot in a cotton field ; but they did not come up to my solitary cock.

The habits of the lesser bustard or *Houbara* is much the same as the above. My son and I found one not long ago in a gram field ; as we were riding at the time, we dismounted, and each led his horse, one on either side of the bird, whose dilemma as to which to avoid without flying, was amusing to watch ; at last H. was near enough for a shot, so he knocked him over with a charge of No. 4 shot. It was delicious eating.

The plumage of the greater bustard is splendid material for fly-fishing. No attempt should be made to preserve the skin, for the excessive grease in the skin ruins the feathers, which should therefore be *plucked* out.



DOGS' ENEMIES

The best eating, far and away, of all the bustard family, is the florican. If the reader will refer to Jerdon's "Game Birds of India" he will see a foot-note in the chapter on floricans to the effect that two Forest Officers, on one occasion in Mysore, made a bag of 24 couple of floricans. I do not happen to have the book by me at the time of writing, so cannot quote the exact words. However, the "two Forest Officers" referred to there, were myself and my old friend W. King. It was in the month of January in either 1874 or 1875, that W. K. and I made this and a larger bag of floricans, 48 floricans one day, and 56 floricans another, in sandal-wood plantations of the Bangalore District of Mysore. There was a regimental camp-of-exercise encamped at the time close by, whose mess we thus kept well supplied, otherwise we would have refrained from shooting to this extent.

These floricans we shot only over dogs, who put them up for us in the grass. They are very tender birds and so easily killed, in fact we knocked them over even with snipe shot.

These isolated sandal-wood plantations being usually the only cover in many miles of country, and being strictly preserved, were simply packed with small game of all kinds, as well as with hundreds of cobras; cobras in these plantations being so numerous, that it was positively dangerous to work them.

In open country, also, we have grouse; but to my way of thinking they do not afford much sport. There are two varieties which are commonly met with in the plains: the "black-bellied" grouse, which is the larger and handsomer bird, and the "pin-tail." They may often be seen circling in large flocks high up in the air, uttering their jerky cries. On the ground they lie very close, rising almost at one's feet, though, as they always lie right out in the open, there is little or no chance of passing them by without putting them up. Their flight, from the moment they rise, is very sharp and quick, with some twisting, so they are not quite easy to hit, and being exceedingly tough birds, they are not easy to bring down even when they are hit. They are not fit to eat unless first skinned. Before retiring to rest at night they invariably drink, being very persistent in their evening flights to the nearest water.

I might have remarked on the converse to this point regarding jungle-fowl, that is, they are not at all dependent on water, for I have frequently found them as much as twenty miles from the nearest water, the reason probably being that they find sufficient moisture for their purpose in the various insects which they eat.

We now come to water birds and will start on the outskirts with coolan. These miniature sairus are winter visitants, whose V-shaped presence a mile up in the sky is announced by their many-voiced and strident cries. They will be found in groups of five and six while feeding in gram fields in the morning and large flocks later in the day on the fringes of tanks or river sand-banks. They are very shy birds and so excessively difficult to approach. But when you have succeeded, after a lot of labour, in getting within reach and have shot some of them, they are, in my opinion, scarcely worth eating, being

very like dark-coloured beef, in spite of their much vaunted praise as a table delicacy.

Geese, on the other hand, are much better eating, though you will feel sorry for yourself if you eat too much of them several days running. Their habits are much the same as those of the coolan. They can often be intercepted early in the morning, as they fly low over the ground to their mid-day retreat on some tank or river, on their way from their feeding grounds in the gram fields further inland. They are frequently to be seen in their thousands, packed close together, so that a rifle-ball fired in their midst is sure to place a number of them, perhaps five or six, *hors de combat*.

Now for the acme of shooting: the snipe! On the tanks, we have two kinds of these winter visitors—the “full” snipe, and the slightly smaller bird or pin-tail, which also has a shorter bill.

I cannot account for the extraordinary fascination which the shooting of this bird has, for what is easier *when one has really got one's “eye in”*? But though one may frequently continue to drop dead twenty or more birds without a single miss, the fascination never palls. The secret is, I think, to *get on to the bird the moment it rises*—then to follow quickly three twists and fire. This is my sensation.

Snipe are apt to be rather wild early in the morning, while, when the heat of the day is greater, they lie much closer and then give easier shots. So the sportsman can take his choice.

The little “jack-snipe” is good eating, though small, but affords poor sport in being such a slow flyer. The same holds good with the “painted-snipe” except the eating part, for he has not anything like the gamey flavour that the ordinary snipe has.

Another and a much rarer variety is the “wood-snipe,” which I have occasionally found and shot in lonely pools in the very hearts of the jungles. It is a very much larger bird than the ordinary snipe, being almost double its size.

In snipe-shooting the sportsman should proceed with as little noise as possible in order not to scare the birds before arriving well within shot; for this reason alone it is difficult to use dogs at this game, for in water the dog is obliged to proceed in a series of plunges, which not only makes a lot of unnecessary noise, but is also very exhausting to the poor dog.

On the other hand, I frequently employ my dogs in duck-shooting for the purpose of retrieving wounded duck when it was not dangerous for them to do so in the absence of crocodiles.

In Mysore, I had a spaniel named "Mooklish" whom I had trained in a large swimming-bath to dive for large white stones, which after a time he could dive for and retrieve from depths of eight to ten feet of water. This training was then continued with the aid of captured wild ducks from my tealery.

On being released into the swimming-bath, with their wings cut, the wild ducks of course at once dived when the dog went in after them. The water being very clear, and well lighted, it was a very



A TEALERY.

pretty sight to see the manner in which the dog pursued their every twist and turn, perhaps some six feet below the surface of the water.

After this training, there were very few ducks that escaped by diving from old "Mooklish" when we were shooting on tanks. His great delight was to hunt the three-parts grown flappers of the spotted-bill ducks, who breed in thousands on the lakes of Mysore : being yet unable to fly, these birds of course resorted to diving in order to escape, only to find that the dog was in his element at this game. Water dogs can soon be taught to dive by taking them to a clear pool of water and throwing white objects into it for them to retrieve, first in shallow water, then into deeper and deeper water, so that finally they will disappear entirely under water for fifteen to



twenty seconds at a time, and it gets them accustomed to swimming under water in this manner after duck.

Among other ducks that also breed in India are the nucta-geese and the whistling-teal; these are strictly tree-duck, but on one occasion I found the nest of the "whistlers" built on the ground, which contained no less than twenty-six eggs, showing that more than one bird had combined to lay eggs in the same nest.

Of the winter visitors the best eating are the mallard, pin-tails, and the several varieties of pochards and teal. The shoveller is not nice to the taste, while the Brahmani, being a very unclean feeder, invariably eating carrion or the body of the "dead-Hindoo" found in the rivers, should never be placed on the table.

I am not a lover of duck-shooting on big tanks. If there is a large party shooting on a big tank, I prefer personally to prospect other smaller pools or streams in the neighbourhood, in company with my dogs; and in this manner generally find, at the end of the day that my individual bag is considerably larger than the individual bags of my friends, who have been blazing away all day at out-of-reach shots on the big tank, while I have also enjoyed a much greater variety, both in the character of the shots and the methods of obtaining them. I recall one occasion when there happened to be a thick *dak*-jungle containing a number of isolated pools of water within it, which lay in the neighbourhood of a huge tank outside, on which a large party of shooters were blazing away. In the meanwhile, I took up my post in the thick jungle between the pools, and had a very warm time in dropping the birds on all sides of me as they swooped over the cover. These birds were retrieved for me by my dogs, but for whom I would not have recovered half of them, on account of the denseness of the jungle.

I never let dogs go into the water after birds, unless there has first been a considerable number of shots fired. The firing has the effect of sending all possible crocodiles to the bottom like so many stones, after which it is usually safe enough to let the dogs go into the water; nevertheless I still keep a close watch over the dogs with my gun ready loaded, and the moment I see an ugly snout appear on the surface, I blaze at it with shot and send it down with more than it ever bargained to have up its nostrils.



A DAY'S BAG OF DUCK AND SNIP.



Weeds are another thing which the master of dogs have continually to be on the watch for. Many a time I have had to hastily throw off my coat and swim out to the rescue of my dog that had been caught by weeds, which were gradually but surely drawing him down in spite of his frantic efforts and piteous cries. Weeds are very dangerous to human beings also, if they attempt to use any force with them. When caught by a weed, immediately back water, and the slackening will make the weed unwind and release its hold, while to pull forcibly away makes it wind tighter on its own strands that are around the limb. A really good swimmer, who is confident in his powers, and is thoroughly at home in water in any position, need have very little fear of weeds as long as he keeps cool and



OTTERS.

moves very gently in them. There should be no jerky movements whatever ; a gentle gliding or floating motion is what should be adopted in dealing with weeds.

Many young men while duck-shooting get themselves wet from head to foot out of pure bravado, to show their companions what strong constitutions they have ! The risk of staying in wet clothes, on a cold winter's day in India, and its consequences of fever, dysentery, liver, abscess, etc., etc , is far too great for the indulgence of such childish foolishness.

While shooting in winter on jungle-pools, one is sometimes liable to be taken by surprise by flushing a wood-cock, and in our astonishment, our brain does not work quick enough to enable us to fire at it before it is out of shot. I put one up in this manner lately in the

Doon, so that it was not till I had marked it down and flushed it a second time that I shot it.

Otters also are frequently seen on the jungle rivers. They are pretty little animals, with pretty skins, and very playful in their natural habits: they have often kept me amused watching them for an hour at a time, while seated silently on a tree on the banks of a river while waiting for a beat to come up. In the larger rivers, such as the Ganges, they often run to a great size and look like seals.

I will now close this otherwise endless account of jungle sights and scenes.



A BUFFALO HEAD.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

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### BUFFALO-TRACKING IN THE AHIRI FORESTS.

During the years 1869-'70 and '71 I was employed in demarcating certain unexplored forests in the neighbourhood of Ahiri, in the Chanda District, which it was proposed to take under the wing of the Forest Department. These forests, now known as the Bheemaroo and Meerculloo Forests Reserves, lay near the beautiful Pranhita River, between the Pranhita and the mighty Indravatti.

To the north and east of these forests, between these two rivers, the country consists of vast undulating plains (interspersed with a few hills here and there) choked tight with thorns and brambles and tunnelled for mile upon mile with labyrinthian tracks made by countless wild animals, swarming with buffaloes, bison, tigers, panthers and countless lesser game of almost every kind. Occasionally these plains would be burnt over, but being intersected throughout by numerous other streams, such as the Muna, Dena, Pirmeli and

Bandia rivers, various portions would escape the fire, and so serve as the resorts for the game of the country.

It was here that my lot was cast, frequently for eight and nine months at a time, without seeing a white man or hearing English spoken. The nearest railway station was four or five hundred miles off, and the nearest point of civilization of any kind was at Chanda, some 89 miles away, accessible only by precarious jungle tracks, often cut off altogether by swollen and flooded rivers, such as the Waingunga and Andher. So, it will be understood, that I was not troubled much in those days by the post, by telegrams or duns! How the present young official generation, I notice, regret that those old conditions in such matters are not still in vogue.

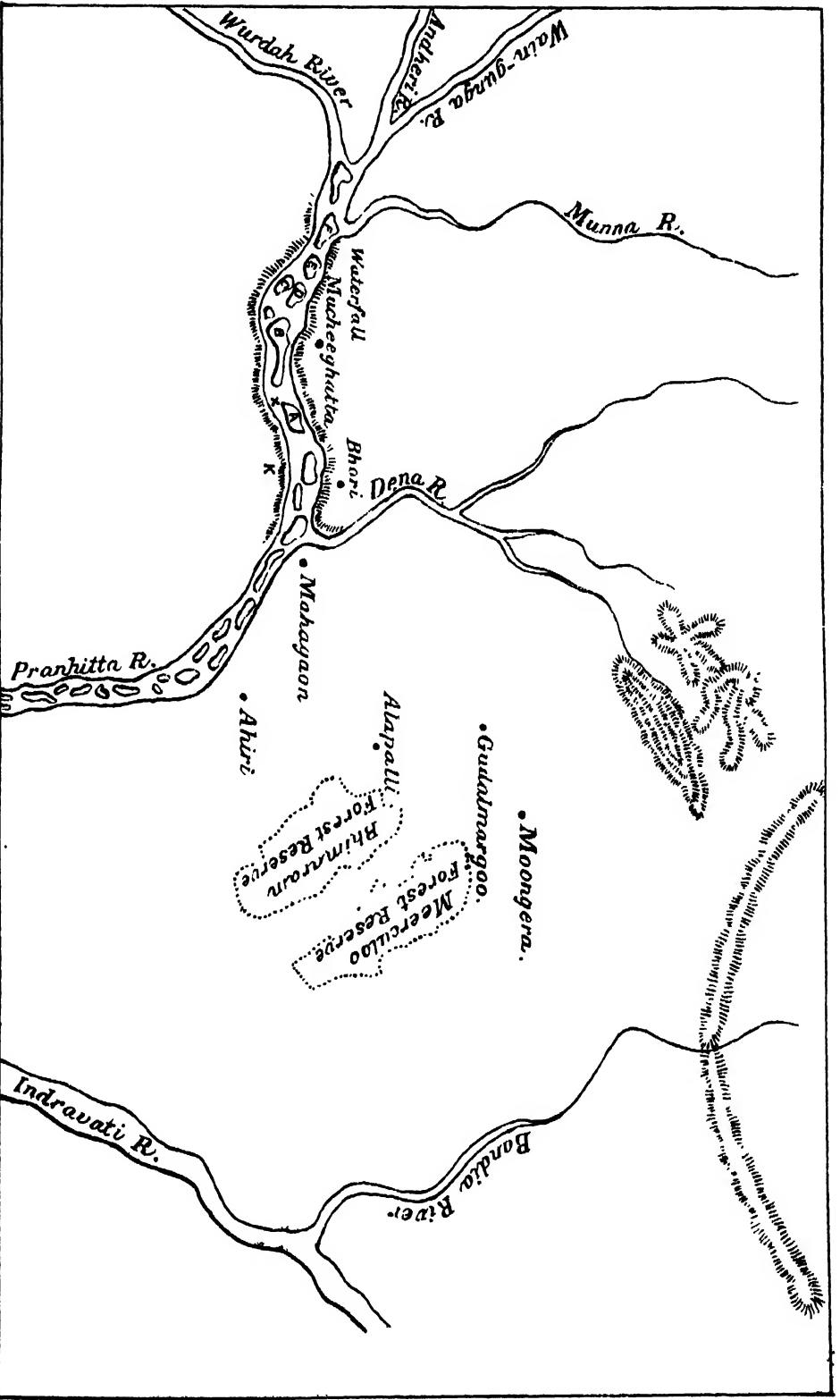
I was practically my own master, as long as I satisfied my superiors with a report once in a while to the effect that my work was progressing satisfactorily, for which, moreover, they had to take my word, for no one would come out to such an outlandish place. As for "duns," I simply could not spend even my meagre salary. But my opportunities for sport were unlimited.

In this chapter, however, I propose giving an account of the sport in regard to buffalo shooting that was to be had in these regions in the year 1870.

In buffalo-tracking, the chief point to be remembered is that the sportsman *must be on the spot before daybreak*. The second point is to travel *light*, not only for the above reason, but in order to be able to follow up, promptly and continuously, wounded animals, for no animal in the world has more vitality and takes more killing than does an old bull-buffalo on occasions.

In order to illustrate what I mean, I will give a detailed account of one of my experiences in the Ahiri forests in the year mentioned. I was camped at Alapalli at the time, the vast grass plains of which, at that period, used to swarm with herds of wild buffaloes, who fed on the fruit of the date trees with which these plains were dotted, where there was not a single village within a day's march of each other.

There was a certain old bull near Alapalli, who for some time past had been making himself obnoxious to the villagers, who, on my arrival, came to me in a body and begged me to kill him.







I sent my shikaries out to mark this particular bull down ; but, in the meanwhile, as I had cleared off all the work I had been given to do and was awaiting orders, I determined to utilize the interval in having a real good fling after buffalo.

I had a splendid elephant at my disposal named "Barg Bahadur"—name meaning : " dauntless of tigers "—so I loaded this elephant with enough supplies for myself and my men ; and taking one personal servant, my shikaries and elephant-drivers, set off on the top of our various bundles as jolly as sandboys for the jungles ; to camp, sleep or journey, when or wherever it might please us, quite independent of everybody.

We carried large water-cans on the elephant, and as the weather was fine, being April, we were at liberty to pull up and camp wherever it pleased us.

It was with this delightfully movable column, that we set out on the tracks of the bull, who, my shikari returned to say, had on the day previous, while they were tracking him, tossed his brother up into a tree, fortunately with no worse results than a torn shin and a broken match-lock gun.

We did not have much difficulty in finding the tracks of the bull, who was a solitary one, for he was fond of coming to certain mowah trees to eat the fruit thereof ; from whence we followed him across a *maidan* or plain into the Government reserve forest, where he had apparently gone to lie down.

By this time it was sun-down, so we left him to be tracked in the morning, for we knew we were practically on his ground. I therefore halted where we were, and after my servant had supplied my inner man, lay down on a bed of grass with the starry canopy of the heavens over my head for a tent, without a single care in the world, and dreamt of the buffaloes we were going to engage with. A delightfully healthy, innocent life, so what could a young man have better.

We were up before daylight, and by the time I had my tea, some *chapatees*, butter and eggs, it was light enough to follow the tracks of the bull.

Nor had we far to go, for within a mile we came upon his fresh dung, still warm. In another few hundred yards I espied our

friend glaring at us with his nose up in the air, with a very truculent air, so I immediately ordered my men to retire, while I advanced towards him on the elephant.

Suddenly, to my surprise, he began to canter towards us, with his nose and head still held out in that extraordinary poky kind of way that buffaloes have.

I let him come on when, suddenly, he lowered his head and made a most determined charge at my elephant, whom he might possibly have even knocked over, for such a thing has been done by a wild buffalo before, had I not fired and knocked him over just in the nick of time, upon which the elephant slewed round and let fly a mighty kick into the buffalo's side, which, had it caught him fairly, would have settled the matter once and for all. But as it was, the elephant having presented his rear end to the buffalo, the latter recovered himself and disappeared in the grass before I could get another shot into him.

We then pressed the elephant quickly on to his trail ; but the bull had had enough of elephants, for though we put him out several times, he never stayed long enough to give a chance for a shot. He was evidently frightened of the elephant ; so I got off and tracked him quietly on foot.

There was plenty of blood, the frothy nature of which told me that he had been hit vitally.

The spear-grass, however, was terrible ; great black bunches of it hanging in clusters everywhere getting in between my legs, so that I frequently found it impossible to take a single step further until I had first rid myself somewhat of the worst of my tormentors.

I was engaged in one of these interesting and most essential performances, when suddenly up jumped the wounded buffalo and stood glaring at me, with his nose held straight in my direction, with one fore-leg raised as if in hesitation as to whether to charge or not.

It was a particularly inopportune moment for me, for at that instant I was terribly hung up by a huge bunch of spear-grass having lodged itself in between my legs, and though I was threatened with instant annihilation, I could not for the life of me stop my operation in order to raise my rifle.





The bull, however, very considerably paused, until I had finished, when I raised the rifle to my shoulder and dropped him, never to move again, with a shot in the throat.

He proved to be a very old bull, with very massive but not long horns, which were very much knocked about.

The bramble with which the grass about here was matted, was very stiff, to which even the elephant objected ; so we determined to cross over to the northern side of Alapalli, where the grass had been more or less burnt, and where the green grass coming up in patches on the burnt area attracted a large number of animals.

On our way we saw a number of bison, but as we were not after them this trip, we left them alone for fear of disturbing our legitimate quarry, except one bull-bison, who, just as we had made up our minds to halt for the evening camp, suddenly jumped up out of a dense patch of grass to the right of the elephant, whom I dropped with a lucky snapshot which broke his back. We then halted and commenced to make our arrangements for the night, sending some of the men to fetch fire-wood.

After a short while, one of the latter came running back in alarm and reported that he had stumbled on to a tiger lying on the top of some animal which it had killed, within two hundred yards of our camp.

I at once took up my rifle and followed him and as we neared the spot, we were greeted with growls coming from the direction of some brambles, where the man said the " kill " lay.

Circling cautiously round this bush, I at last made out the head and eyes of the tiger, at which I took careful aim, and succeeded in braining him as he lay on the top of the dead body of a doe sambhar which he had just killed. It proved to be a magnificent male tiger, so I considered myself lucky in having secured him by such a mere accident ; for tigers hereabouts were very difficult to obtain on account of the denseness of cover and the absence of a sufficient number of human beings and elephants with which to beat them out.

In the plain, north of Alapalli, for which we were now heading, was reputed to live a monstrous old bull-buffalo, of whom I had long heard a lot as to the enormous size of his body, the spread of his

horns, the huge size of his foot-marks, etc. ; all of which were spoken of as being so extraordinary, that I was inclined to be somewhat sceptical regarding him, thinking perhaps that all this might be only the outcome of their fantasies of mind regarding hobgoblins, *bhuts*, etc., with which the imagination of these aboriginal tribes peopled the jungles. However, my shikaries were so positive about him, that I determined now to look him up, if he really existed. So early next morning we were off again at dawn, hunting for the tracks of this most extraordinary bull.

We first visited his favourite grove of date-trees which he was said to frequently haunt ; and here I found what almost confirmed my suspicion, that this was a myth, namely, at the foot of a *peepal* tree were some stones all smeared and strewn with red paint and cocoanut-shells which meant that some jungle deity resided here.

However, there were plenty of tracks about of ordinary-sized bulls, and as the day was yet young, I determined to take up the tracks of one of the best of these over the burnt grass, and follow him. The tracking on such ground was easy, but the stern chase was a long one ; so that the sun was high in the heavens by the time we came in sight of the bull in company with five or six cows and calves, just as they were disappearing into a shallow depression full of grass, several hundred yards ahead.

Luckily, the wind was in our favour, so that the animals did not detect us ; leaving the elephant and men behind, I crept forward alone in hopes of finding sufficient cover to enable me to approach close enough for a shot without being seen by them. But in this I was disappointed, so I worked my way round to the left to a point where some rocks cropped out of the ground ; on reaching which I found that I was in luck's way ; for here, by the configuration of the ground, I recognized that this spot formed a natural lead out of the hollow, so that the buffaloes were almost certain to come out of it this way eventually.

So I ensconced myself in a narrow cleft between the rocks where I was, moreover, quite safe from being charged ; and laid myself out to wait for the buffaloes, whom I could see quite plainly about three hundred yards away where they had apparently made up their minds to lay up during the heat of the day.

Fortunately my men, seeing me head for the rocks, guessed my intention correctly, and waited quietly where they were ; for I had to wait in this stiff and cramped position for four solid hours before the old bull finally got up and stretched himself ; after which he commenced to slowly graze towards me, knocking the flies off him as he came ; upon which the cows and calves also got up, stretched themselves, and followed in the wake of their lord and master.

The bull was leading and heading straight in my direction, so it was evident, if all went well, he would pass by within a few feet of my position.

I was on my knee with my rifle to my shoulder, waiting for him to appear opposite the gap ; and as he did so, I let him have it behind the shoulder with a 12-bore rifle hardened bullet, propelled by 6 drachms of powder, to which he fell heavily, and the second barrel finished him.

On looking beyond him, to my surprise I saw a calf also on its side on the ground, my first bullet having pierced the bull and struck the calf in the neck and killed it.

The cows immediately rushed off ; and then, coming to a halt about a hundred yards off, turned to look for the reason of all the commotion ; but the mother of the calf remained and vainly strove to raise up her calf with her nose ; then, smelling the blood, she turned to look for the enemy that had done this thing.

The cleft in which I was, was so narrow, that I knew the spread of her horns alone would prevent her getting at me, so, wishing to see what she would do, I held up my handkerchief in order to intimate my position.

On seeing it she immediately lowered her head and charged the mouth of the cleft like an avalanche ; the crash was terrific, which brought her to her knees, where she lay in a heap in a stunned condition for several moments ; then recovering herself, drew back for a yard and charged again in a blind fury, shock after shock cutting the sides of her face terribly on the sides of the rocks on each side ; then finding that this was no use, she commenced to try and worm her way in by pushing and wriggling her muzzle into the gap, with glaring eyes and panting and snorting nostrils, the blood streaming down the sides of her face, for in her furious rage she was insensible to all



pain or danger. Verily, an avenging fiend, who cared for nought so long as she obtained her revenge.

In the meanwhile the others, seeing that something was on foot, also came up and collected in an admiring and curious crowd behind her, thinking perhaps she might need help or that she had cornered a tiger. Altogether my position began to feel quite uncanny.

I knew the old girl would keep me pent up there for a week if she was permitted to do so ; so I was obliged to shoot her, upon



' A WILD BULL BUFFALO.'

which the remainder of the herd finally decamped, thus permitting me to come forth at last from my long confinement.

I admit it was somewhat cruel, but it was a sight worth seeing once in a life time.

I was disappointed to find that the bull was not as large as I had thought him to be when I saw him at a distance. However, I had had an interesting experience and an opportunity of seeing, at close quarters, the reckless and pertinacious fury of a wild buffalo when thoroughly enraged.

Finding water in the depression I have mentioned, we settled to camp here for the night, sending word to a wild tribe of Mayars

near by, that if they wanted plenty of meat it was here to be had for the taking, in return for which some of whom consented to go into Alapalli and fetch us out some more stores of flour, etc., for we were running short of these, having been obliged to give our old "two-tail" large quantities of *chapatees* daily, for its usual fodder of leaves were not always to be found, nor was there time for it to be collected.

We were all now in need of a spell of rest, including the elephant, so the next day we made a lazy day of it and did nothing ; all, except two of my shikaries, who volunteered to go and cast round on the spur of the hills between the rivers Pirmeli and Dena, near which we were now, for the spoors of the "big" bull which they insisted was to be found about here.

In the evening these men returned in a great state of excitement and reported that they had found the fresh tracks of the fabulous bull in the bambu-covered hills to the north of us, and that, if I arrived on the scene before daybreak, we would have a good chance of finding him early.

Accordingly, we started at 3 A.M., and reached the foot of the little group of hills, which were reported to hold so splendid a prize, just as the skies were turning grey with the approach of day. Leaving the elephant to follow as best it might, I and my men pushed on ahead through a lovely bambu forest until we came out on the plateau above.

Continuing, the shikaries led me to a jungle pool, in the wet mud, by the side of which they pointed out among the numerous tracks of wild buffaloes, the footprints of a bull of such an enormous size, that I could scarcely believe my eyes, for they were more like the footprints of a camel in size than that of any buffalo I had hitherto seen, and I had seen and shot a fair number of them—some of whom I had thought very big. But this brute, apparently, was altogether a freak, probably corresponding to a man nine feet in height sometimes found among human beings.

As luck would have it, he had been there that very night, and, what was more, he was apparently alone.

It was with an aching anxiety that I followed his trail from this spot, hoping against hope that none of those numerous little

accidents might occur which so often crop up to baulk a sportsman at the very moment of his victory.

Down one spur and up the other went the trail ; and then down again on the further side into a swampy valley full of tall reedy grass, in which one of the tributaries of the Dena had its source.

In the ordinary way I never went into dense cover like this after buffalo, who is an extremely nasty customer to tackle under the best of conditions, as I had lately had a lively experience, whose viciousness was such that I knew it would stick to its victim like a terrier after a rat.

But this magnificent beast seemed to me to be worth any and every risk ; so thinking "nothing venture nothing have," I cast caution to the winds, and, leaving the men behind with the elephant, I pushed my way into this dense reed area, for I was certain I would find him lying here.

There was no need to search for his footprints, though these also were clear enough in that marshy soil, for his huge body had made a track through the grass as if an elephant had passed through it, for which reason also my progress was easy.

I had to proceed very slowly so as to avoid making any noise by treading on or violently brushing the reeds. Many a time my heart was brought into my mouth by the rush of other animals, such as sambar or cheetle, whom I disturbed on my way.

But what annoyed me most was the mobbing of a couple of magpies, who, noticing my stealthy movements, immediately elected to accompany me with their annoying cry of *char ! char ! char !* for several hundred yards, which is a sign of alarm to every wild animal in the jungles.

No sooner had they left me in peace again, than up blundered a long-tailed peacock, making a great commotion and sailing away over the tips of the reeds, shrieking his rapid alarm cries of *cok ! cok ! cok ! cok !* At this moment I was, unknown to me, quite close to the buffalo, who, apparently alarmed by the peacock's cries, jumped up scarcely ten yards from me and stood broadside on, listening.

I shall never forget that first sight of him ; looming black and massive in the grass, more like an elephant than any buffalo that I had ever seen.

I took quick aim at his shoulder and fired, and to my great joy saw him come heavily down.

But it was only for a moment, for he was up again and off, followed by my second barrel.

However, the noise of his crashing through the reeds only continued for about a hundred yards and then suddenly ceased, when I thought I heard him fall, followed by a groan.

I immediately dashed forward in his direction, but before I had covered half the distance, I fortunately remembered that wounded buffaloes have a nasty trick of drawing suddenly up in this manner and waiting quietly behind a bush for their enemy, when woe betide the latter if he passes incautiously by.

This, fortunately, made me pull up to think ; there was plenty of blood, and at the same moment another groan came from the reeds only about forty yards from me ; evidently he was feeling pretty sick ; but was he *hors de combat*, or only waiting for me to come up ? This I was not prepared to say, for both possibilities were on the cards.

The only tree in this neighbourhood was a large *dhobin* tree ; and any one who knows the *dhobin* tree, knows what wretched, slippery things they are to climb.

I edged round to this tree, on reaching which I found it out of the question to climb it with my rifle in my hand.

However, I only wanted to get a glimpse to see how my quarry was faring, so I placed my rifle on the ground, and after some difficulty succeeded in reaching the first branches about ten feet up. At the same moment the bull, who had all the time been scarcely thirty yards away, spotted me, and came crashing through the reeds to the foot of my tree, where he stood looking longingly up at me with anything but an amiable expression on his face. What a magnificent beast he was ; such a grand sweep of horns and so massive ; and all in perfect condition. I thought then, and I think so now, that his horns were a record the world has ever seen.

Oh ! for my gun. I felt such a helpless babe up there with this magnificent brute within a few feet of me at my mercy had I but a gun, that I felt inclined to cry !

He reared himself up against the trunk of the tree, though one of his shoulders was broken ; limped round and round it, shaking his head and grunting. I took off my *kamarband*, with which I might in the first instance have slung my coveted rifle to my back, had I then thought it necessary, and making a slip-knot at the end of it tried to snare my rifle ; but, as the bull persisted in butting at the dangling cloth, I failed.

I knew the brute would keep me there till thirst forced him to go ; so in despair I shouted for the elephant to come up, trusting that he would deal with the bull as he did with the one on the previous occasion when it charged, which I was certain this one would do. The moment the elephant appeared on the scene, the bull went for it ; but Barg Bahadur had learnt the trick and remembered it, for he immediately swung round and let fly a cow-kick, as all elephants do when they kick, and knocked the bull over.

The moment the bull left my tree, I slithered down and snatched up my loaded rifle ; and as he picked himself up and was about to repeat his charge on the elephant, I fired quickly hitting him somewhere in the body, which made him change his mind and plunge heavily into the jungle.

After this, I thought it advisable to follow him on the elephant, one of the shikaries tracking the blood immediately under the trunk of the elephant, while I kept guard over him from above.

In this manner we came upon him repeatedly, but never getting more than a snapshot at him as he blundered on again.

In this way we tracked him for eight miles up the valley of the river ; after which he left the river and struck off across more open country, apparently heading for the hills to the east in the direction of Bastari.

We tracked him altogether about sixteen miles to another little range of hills, where, at nightfall we halted, and determined to again take up the trail on the following morning.

Next morning we again took up the trail, which did not, as we had expected, lead to the hills where we might have lost the trail when the blood stopped, but had fortunately branched off, probably on account of his broken shoulder, across the large grassy plain through which ran the river Bandia where, at this time, the grass had for

the most part been burnt, leaving only patches here and there, so that it was now an easy matter to track the bull by his foot-marks alone. But the stern chase was destined to be a long one indeed.

The whole of that day we chivied that unfortunate old bull from patch to patch, seeing him sometimes plunging along as much as half a mile ahead of us, with his broken shoulder swinging as he went, but for which shoulder our elephant might have fared badly when he was charged. Had I had a horse, I could have easily overtaken and killed the bull, but as matters were, the only thing to do was to stick to him and slog him down.

At nightfall we were obliged to halt again. The two days of continual strain was beginning to tell severely on all of us.

But my purpose was set ; so on we plodded again next morning, the third morning since we started after this bull.

The trail was still over burnt areas, so we soon came up with the bull again, for, in his wounded state, he must have been a great deal more cooked than we were.

I had many more shots, hitting him several more times and making fresh flows of blood on his tracks ; but he seemed to bear a charmed life and held on as before.

So the bull continued to pound along on ahead with his shoulder swinging, while we, equally doggedly, pounded along behind.

After his experience with the elephant he never attempted to charge again ; so as he appeared to be afraid of the elephant, I attempted again, time after time, to stalk him on foot in the grass.

But the old fellow now knew he was being followed by persistent and dangerous foes, so he was always on the watch for the slightest sound and invariably succeeded in giving me the slip every time, for in the tall grass I could not see him go out.

In this manner we hunted him from patch to patch, moving in the direction of Bastar, when suddenly an idea seemed to strike the bull, for he, all of a sudden, doubled on his tracks and commenced to head for the big river Indravati. I guessed his object and knew that if he attained it, the game was up.

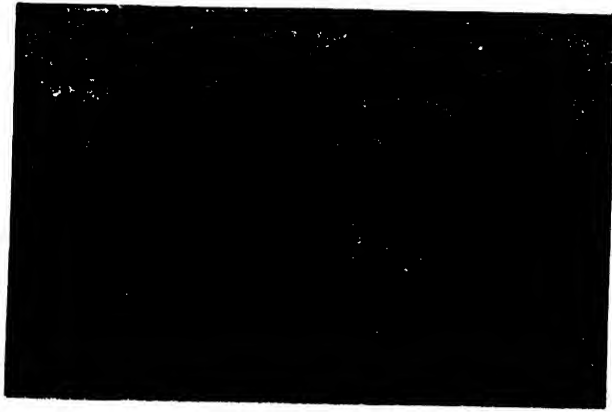
An hour before sundown we bade good-bye to the wonderful beast, as we saw him clamber painfully out on the further side of the Indravati river, which here was about half a mile wide, with a

swift current, and full of crocodiles. There was no wood about which to make rafts, and the nearest boats were twenty miles off.

I would not risk the elephant, tired as he was, in such a stream ; there were no means of either swimming or floating across and we were all dog-tired ; so it was with a sigh of regret and admiration that I took off my hat to the plucky old fellow as he turned, limned against the sky, to give us one last defiant stare and a shake of his grand, old head, before he finally disappeared from our ken. Moreover, it would have been of no use for us to go round to the further side of the river, for the jungles on the further side had not been burnt, so that we would have been unable to track him.

I have shot many buffaloes before and since, but like the fish that one does not get, I have never seen the like of him.

With after knowledge, I now know that I lost this buffalo because I used hardened bullets with too large a charge of powder, the bullets merely whipping through and out of him, without meeting sufficient resistance, and so failed to administer any shock to the system.



## CHAPTER XXX.

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### SARK TIGERS, CHINDWARA.

*15th March, 1887.*

The now famous Pench River rises on the central water-shed in the Chindwara District, and after flowing due east to the borders of the district, it turns abruptly due south, forming, from that point, the boundary line between the districts of Chindwara and Seonee. Near this turning point in the river on the boundary, is a little village called Sark (marked "Sank" on the map), which was the scene of the narrative given in this chapter, and is the same place referred to as "Saakh" by Sterndale on page 127 of his book "Seonee" printed in 1887, the very year that I myself was shooting round Sark or Saakh.

In March 1887, there was a great deal of burning of Government forests going on over the border in the Seonee District, so I hurried down to the border in order to take the necessary steps to prevent similar conflagrations taking place in my forests also.

The steps which I took consisted chiefly in the granting of petty concessions to local villagers in matters regarding wood, grass, etc., on condition that they refrained from setting on fire the forests under my charge. This was of course quite irregular, and perhaps



illegal from the official red-tape point of view ; but I looked upon the granting of such concessions as a matter of the essential policy and tact whereby a " self-interest " was created which prompted the villagers to protect these forests from fire, without which it was impossible to preserve them, and Government would have lost enormously to a far greater extent.

On the other hand, the scene across the border, especially at night time, was very imposing, for, as far as the eye could see, for mile upon mile, the forests were ablaze.

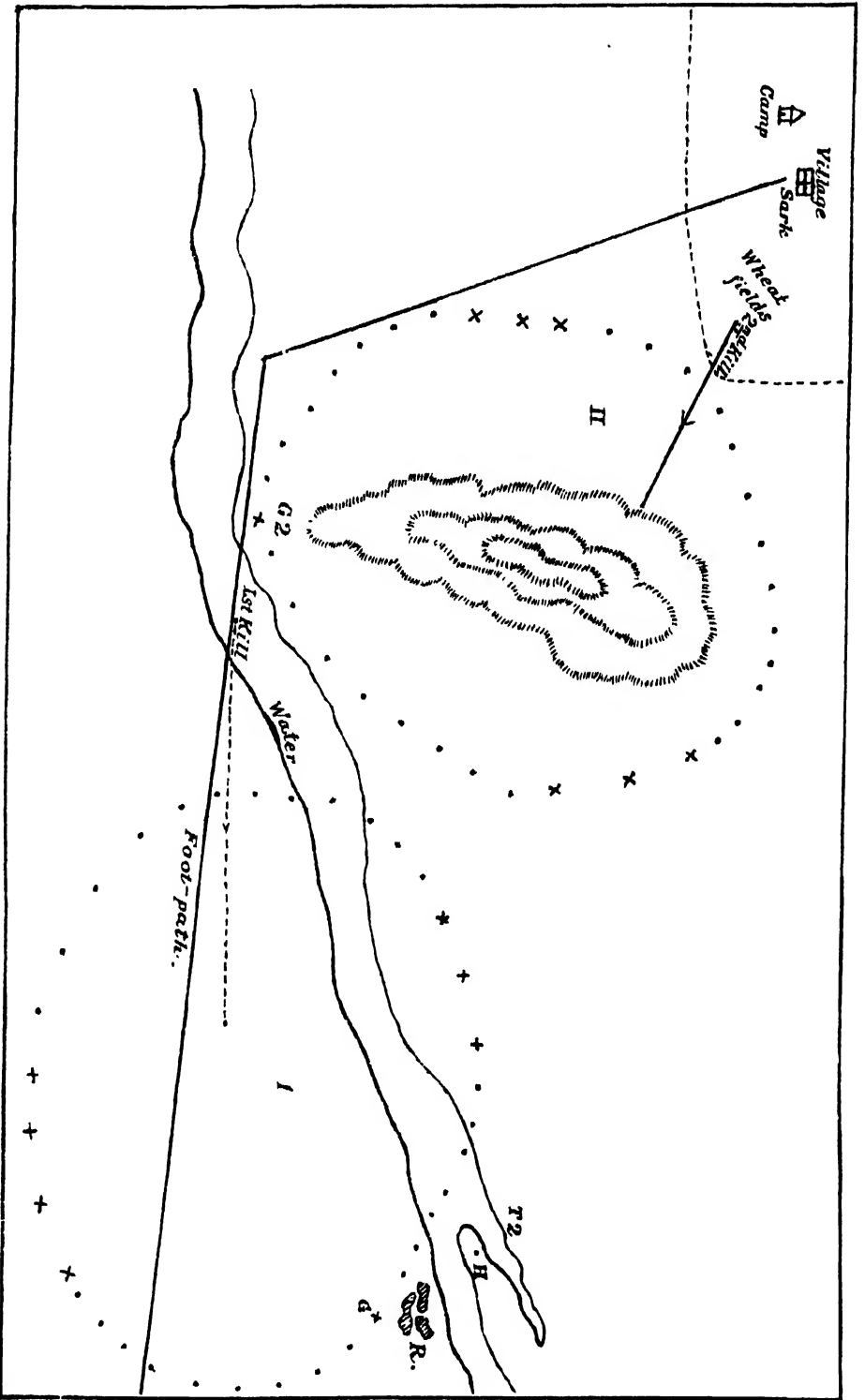
However, it is an ill-wind that blows no one any good, and I could not help a chuckle over the misfortune of my neighbours, for it was driving all their tigers over into my forests.

In fact, the influx of tigers was so great that there was an outcry from the villagers within the borders of my district, on account of the ravages committed by these tigers among their cattle. So great were these complaints, that I was afraid that the villagers would be also setting fire to my forests in order to burn the tigers out in a similar manner, and so force them to leave the locality. So, as I wished to save my forests, it behoved me to lay myself out to kill off some of these tigers.

As the chief complaints came from the Banjaras at Sark, I moved my camp to that village and had buffs tied out, and on the following morning received news of a kill (1 kill), about two miles from my camp.

It was a joke among my family that my youngest child, Babs, could always foretell correctly the luck that we were to meet in shikar, so that I always used to ask her, before setting out, how many tigers we were going to get during the day, when she would either shake her head, or hold up one or more of her little fingers, which denoted the number of tigers we would bring back, and strange to say, she was almost invariably correct. On this occasion she held up *two* fingers at which I laughed, for I had information of only one tiger.

The buff had been killed in the bed of a small river by a pool of water and had been dragged into the heavy jungle on the further side. So I proceeded up the bed of the river and selected as my post, a tree (G1) near the bank of the river, though there was little to



SARK.



choose, the jungle here being all in one dead-level, and having put up the stops in the usual manner, and sent my men back to bring up the beat, I climbed my ladder and awaited events.

In about half an hour's time the beat started, and the first thing I saw was a large panther, who suddenly flashed up the bare trunk of a *sal* tree with incredible swiftness, where he remained seated in a fork of the tree some fifteen feet from the ground. He was evidently very frightened about something, and his antics were ludicrous to watch as he anxiously peered down, first one side of the tree, and then the other. He then rushed hurriedly down the tree again and scampered off in great haste, half looking over his shoulder as he went. He never saw me from first to last, though I was only about ten yards from him and on the same level as himself when he was upstairs, so preoccupied was he with the danger he anticipated below and behind him.

Of course I allowed him to go, for I knew perfectly well that it was the tiger that had alarmed him. Nor was I mistaken, for a few minutes later a large tigress appeared suddenly at a trot, on the exact spot where the panther had lately been.

She was under my ladder before I could fire, and my second shot at her behind was too uncertain. However, my first shot had hit her, though too far back, for she spoke to it as she bounded off and disappeared into some basalt rocks (R) to the rear of my position, behind which I had placed a man on a tree to keep a look-out.

On enquiry, I learnt from the latter that the tigress had not passed out of these rocks ; so she was apparently lying in them, probably very sick or dead. So I had the rocks immediately surrounded by men up trees, while others were sent off to bring a herd of village cattle which we had seen grazing near by.

On the arrival of the herd, we at once drove them, with also a flock of goats, up to the rocks. But as soon as the cattle smelt the tiger they stampeded in all directions (there were no buffaloes among them), but goats are much more stupid creatures, so these remained and, in the most unconcerned manner, nibbled the leaves and grass right in front of the fissure into which the tigress had gone. But the tigress neither moved nor spoke.

Thinking she might be dead inside, I climbed up on to the top of the rocks, and flung large stones down through the cracks in the rocks, and in a short while heard the tigress begin to move about below me. I then obtained some larger pieces of rock and tumbled them down through the fissure below, which had the desired effect, for the tigress charged out with a roar towards the river-bed, slithering down the bank and then across a bit of shallow water. I could not fire at her until she was well in the bed of the river, though whether I had hit her or not, I was unable to say at the time, but I did not like the look of the manner in which she raced at a gallop across the bed of the river and across a piece of land which looked like an island on the further side, for it looked as if I might not get her.

Being anxious to keep her in sight, as long as possible, when she was in more or less open country, I slipped off the rocks and legged it after her as fast as I could move, edging off a bit to the right of her course. I then found that what appeared to be an island was a small promontory or projection from the further bank ; and on climbing carefully to the top of this, I was delighted to see my lady lying on a shelving bank (T2) under some roots on the further side of the intervening strip of sand, about a hundred yards away. I knew she must be pretty sick to have stopped there, though she was apparently watching for me, for she had her head pointed in my direction and looked anything but amiable. But I took care not to show myself ; and resting my elbows on the bank (H) I took a steady shot with my rifle, and brought her tumbling down in a heap, never to move again.

I see from my diary that I gave her altogether five shots, four of which struck her ; of these one only was from my smooth-bore (the first shot), the remainder being from my '450 Express rifle, which does not speak very well for the effectiveness of such a rifle when the shots cannot be "placed".

On my return to camp, I twitted my little daughter regarding her prophesy that I would get *two* tigers ; but while so engaged, there was a great outcry in camp, the prominent feature of which was the wailing voice of a woman, and immediately an old woman, the mother of a police constable stationed at the Sark outpost, came and flung

herself at my feet, tearing her hair and crying bitterly that a large tiger had just killed her only milch cow and had dragged it into a wheat-field within a few hundred yards of my camp, where it was eating it at that moment, and that "the Sahib must come at once and revenge her children on this *shaitan* (devil), for her children must now all die, for they would get no milk, etc., etc."

I asked the old lady to give me a little *dum* (breathing time) after my exertions over the tiger I had just killed, and to let me have a cup of tea and a tub, when I would be with her to revenge her and her children on the tiger, with the greatest pleasure. To this she agreed, saying that I was certain to succeed for my *naseeb* (fortune) was good, and "was I not the Sahib who only last year killed three tigers in the neighbourhood of this same village and so saved their cattle," (this was a fact, for I had done so), and "was it not all due to the Sahib's wisdom in having propitiated the forest *deota* (god) with *ghee* and cocoanuts, and had not the Sahib on that occasion of success made all the men of the village happy with a free gift of *dharu*!" (of which I had also been guilty, with an eye to the main chance).

I had not yet had time to pay up and dismiss the beaters, so that they were all still present and eager to beat out the second tiger also. The reputation for success, and the excitement of it, appeals greatly to natives. It is non-success and persistent blundering, which makes them unwilling to help.

Having had my tub, and allowing my breakfast to await my return, I set off with my men and found that the bullock had been killed scarcely four hundred yards from camp, and had been dragged towards a small isolated hill close by. As the tiger had only recently killed the bullock, he might still be lying on the top of it; so I refrained from following the drag.

Sending the beaters round with orders to quietly surround the further side of the hill and then to await the return of my shikari, I proceeded with my stops to the river bank, and there selected a post (G2) near the end of the spur close to the river.

Having put up the stops, the shikari went back to bring up the beaters with only a very little noise, while I climbed into my ladder and waited.

The beat came up almost silently, the men making only just sufficient noise to maintain their line, and as all were very anxious to be rid of these tigers, I had no fear but that they would all work well, and without any tricks.

The tiger came out to me without the slightest hesitation, giving me a steady neck shot (which I always prefer) at about forty yards. I used my '450 Express rifle, and he sank on to his knees without a single sound. But I make it a principle to always put in a second shot, even though when the tiger is "obviously" dead.

That night was one of great rejoicing among the villagers, whom I had supplied the wherewithal for a big feed, not forgetting the "summat" with which to wash it down.

There was another, and a very much worse, cattle-lifting tiger by the neighbouring village of Konapindra. But as my presence was urgently needed elsewhere, I was not able to attend to him until the following month, having, in the meanwhile, picked up three other tigers and a panther on the way at other places.



HOME LIFE IN CAMP

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### LAMPLIGHT FOR PANTHER SHOOTING.

Of course it is well known that panthers can be shot by lamplight, but the general idea is that only those panthers and pantherets can be shot in this manner who are in the habit of prowling about at night round the dwellings of human beings, and have thus become familiar with the sight of fires and lamps, and have come to look on at them as harmless.

However, in the following I will give an instance which goes to show that it is not only such panthers that are fearless of artificial light at night, but that this lack of perception is a trait which is common to them, more or less, as a class; whereas tigers are much cleverer in discriminating an artificial from a natural light.



All wild animals are familiar, especially in the rains, with the sight of marsh-gas, glow-worms, fire-flies, lightning and thunder, and are accustomed every night to have, perhaps, a dense darkness suddenly and brilliantly lit up by the light of a falling star, and to have, during half the month, a more or less bright moon.

This being so, the theory is to imitate a natural phenomenon as near as possible : a flash-light should pass for a meteor ; a lamp fixed up in a tree, with its frosted globe painted with green sprays in imitation of leaves might pass for the moon or as an exaggerated planet in the sky ; an electric night-sight, for a fire-fly, and so on.

Personally, I am not keen on sitting up all night in a fever-stricken jungle, being eaten alive by mosquitoes, and afraid to move hand or foot for fear of being seen or heard.

It is an unhealthy occupation, both physically and morally, and savours too much of the pot-hunting methods of natives. But perhaps these sentiments are those of my later years, for I must confess to having been as keen as any one on sitting up in my younger days, though I never went in for such elaborate lighting arrangements as those which I have hinted at above.

But in these days of electricity, acetylene lamps, etc., there are great possibilities in this line for those, who, like Sanderson, are fond of the "solitary watch in the hushed hours" and of the "fair outwitting of the subtle beast on his own ground"—"who feel the true romance and poetry" of being eaten all night by mosquitoes and enduring, hour after hour, the excruciating pains of cramp.

I generally found that the employment of an artificial light, whether in the depths of a jungle or on the outskirts of a camp, made little difference to a panther, provided a little common sense is also used as to the position of the lamp, not to use a smoky and highly smelling oil, to place it sufficiently high off the ground, to shade and subdue the light by means of light and feathery leaves, etc., for there are many ways of doing a thing. To illustrate what I mean, I will quote the following story to show how a moment's thoughtlessness may frustrate the intentions of the most elaborate arrangements. The D. S. of Police at Seonee, a certain Mr. D., having heard that panthers were to be shot by lamplight, obtained for the purpose an expensive lamp from Messrs. Orr and Sons of Madras, and awaited

his opportunity. When his opportunity came, he got up into his *machan*, but found, when too late, that his shikari had placed the lamp immediately opposite to him on the further side of the kill, so that it was now glaring him in the face and dazzling him. The panther did not mind the lamp, but came straight on to the kill : but Mr. D. was further handicapped, in that he had only one arm (the other arm having been blown off by a loaded rifle which his orderly one day handed up to him in his *machan*—moral), the result of all of which was that he missed the panther, but scored a bull's-eye on the lamp beyond, which his bullet shattered to pieces. I was told this tale by the gentleman himself.

And yet sometimes the most scratch arrangements suffice. On one occasion in the Beitoool District, a family of pantherets, which afterwards turned out to be five in number, killed a pony at night right in the middle of a village. The villagers came to my old friend W. K., who happened to be near by, and begged him to rid them of the pests ; but he was suffering from fever at the time, so gave his rifle to his shikari and told him to sit up for them at night and do the best he could.

In the evening the shikari made a little niche in the mud-wall of a house, under which lay the carcass of the pony. In this niche he placed a native *chirag* or lamp, consisting of a little mud saucer, and little country oil, with a piece of rag in it for a wick. Having lit this, he retired behind a bambu screen of an adjoining cowshed, where he made his bedding comfortable for the night, making a little peep-hole in the screen through which he could see the carcass of the pony lit up by the *chirag* outside.

W. K. said he thought the man had gone mad, for he was blazing away at intervals all through the night ; at any rate, in the morning, the shikari had all five pantherets lying dead in the streets of the village.

Now to show that it is not only village haunting panthers that can be bagged by means of artificial light.

To describe the kind of country I was in at the time, I will quote portions of the notes which I made in my diary at that period, namely, while I was touring round the district of Chindwara in January 1887.

" Inspected the Churni Chagom forests. The Government village of Saori Kori consists of two huts of Koorkoos. In the Tawa River at Mondi Ghogra, the hills run up about 600 feet each side quite perpendicularly ; the sides have a few teak in the gorges, from the largest of which only could sleepers be cut, but to get them down would be almost impossible ; firstly, because the trees would break to bits in falling, and secondly, because there is no road, there being only a narrow footpath along the Tawa River, which here falls in cascades of 40 to 50 feet on to rocks below. The valley from side to side is hardly 300 yards wide. In fact, the jungles are too inaccessible here to be successfully worked. The soil is mostly trap, and grows a few Beja Sal, Blackwood, Tinnas, Dowrah and Shisham." Koorkoos are an aboriginal tribe, usually found in the depths of the jungles, where they live more like monkeys than human beings, subsisting chiefly on forest produce, such as jungle fruits, berries, roots, honey, etc.

From the above it will be seen that my surroundings at the time were fairly wild. There were a few tigers about, so I had some buffs tied out for them.

On the morning of the 18th of January, my men reported that one of the buffs had been killed by a young male tiger ; so I started with the few men that I could get together, to beat for him, but on arriving at the kill, which was in the depths of the forests far away from any human habitations, I found that it was not a tiger, but a large male panther that had killed the buff. A glance at the rocky surroundings showed me that to try and beat for a panther here was hopeless, for he would be sure to *dub* in one of the thousands of fissures and allow the men to walk over him. His tracks showed the panther to be a very large one, as big as a tigress, so I determined to sit up for him. But here again I was met with a difficulty, for the weather was cloudy and cliffs overhung the position of the kill, so that the place at night would be as dark as a pocket. I made up my mind to try a lamp.

The lamp I used was an ordinary wall-lamp which I placed into a *gharra* or earthenware pot, in the side of which I had made a hole large enough to admit the lamp with its frosted globe. This I fastened to the stem of a tree on the same side of the kill

as myself, about seven feet up, covering the whole up as much as possible with light feathery leaves, so that the light when sifted through these leaves, was not too much in evidence, and yet sufficient to light up the kill and all its surroundings.

It had taken some time to obtain the lamp from camp, so that it was late by the time I was finally seated in my *machan* and my men withdrew, making a noise as they went.

The night was cloudy and pitch dark, so that the light from the lamp was exaggerated in consequence, so much so that I was wishing that I had made the light dimmer.

For several hours a deathly silence reigned in the gloom around me. I was feeling terribly cramped and stiff, and one of my feet had gone to sleep, when suddenly, about 60 yards up the *nalla*, I heard just one stone roll, and then silence.

Had more stones rolled, I would have known that the cause of it was probably only a deer; but one and only one stone rolled, so this I knew was one of the mistakes which feline sometimes make. So I resisted the temptation to ease my strained position and sat perfectly still; very curious to see how this panther would behave in the presence of an artificial light, for I knew he could never have seen such a one in all his life.

During the next half an hour, however, nothing happened. I was watching in this manner, when suddenly on the outskirts of the circle of light, on the further side of the kill, I saw a long ghostly form move swiftly from one side to the other, which I knew was that of the panther. After a time there was a loud sniffing and snorting under my tree, from whence it moved into the rear of the lamp. It was the panther investigating. He was apparently soon satisfied, for suddenly he walked calmly right out into the light before the lamp as if he was accustomed to it every day of his life. He then laid hold of the kill and attempted to drag it away, but in this he failed, for I had of course taken the precaution of tying it to a stump.

Failing in this, he then lay down full length on top of the kill, with his head towards me, and commenced feeding on the hind-quarters of the kill. I could have killed him before now, time after time, but I was curious to see what difference, if any, the

light would make in his behaviour. I found, however, that it made no difference to him whatever, though it made all the difference in the world to me, for I could even see the spots on the animal quite distinctly, and could easily see the sights of my rifle. Fearing that by some accident I might lose him if I delayed any longer, I aimed at the nape of his neck, between his shoulders, and fired.

The animal never moved ; his head only dropped a few inches lower and there were a few spasmodic twitches of his tail, that was all. He had been killed stone dead as if struck by lightning, still retaining his life-like position on the kill, with his elbows spread out on it and head towards me.

I whistled up my men who were waiting about half a mile away. When they arrived and saw the animal, they at once started back, crying out that it was alive, so life-like was its position, and it was with difficulty that I convinced them that it was dead.

On examining it we found it, as we expected, to be a very large male panther, measuring nearly eight feet.

This is one of several panthers which I have shot by means of artificial light, the behaviour of each on such occasions being much the same. Of course, on several occasions the panther failed to turn up at all when I was using a lamp in this manner, or, if it did come, refused to come up to the kill. But this proves nothing one way or the other, for how many scores of times does this occur when one is sitting up in the ordinary way, without a lamp. Everything depends on the particular character of the panther one is after, some being more, and some less, suspicious than others, and so on.

One's natural inclination is not to use anything artificial in this manner, and to trust to getting the panther by the light of the stars, by moonlight or before nightfall ; but this is not always practicable, especially in heavy jungles. Personally, I think that the majority of panthers, when hungry, will come up sooner to a kill which is lying in a small circle of light thrown by a carefully guarded lamp, than to a kill which is lying exposed to the light of a full moon, for all feline are very reluctant to leave the shadows of the trees on a night when there is full moon, and will more often than not deliberately wait for the moon to set before they do so, or not come at all.

I first learnt the tip of using artificial light for night-shooting from the wild jungle tribes down in the district of Chanda, when I was there as a youngster ; where I shot several panthers with only the humble arrangement of an ordinary empty cocoanut-shell and a little country oil with a piece of rag in it for a wick. These people are experts at using artificial light for night shikar. One of their methods is to go at night into the haunts of deer with a flaring resinous torch, and while the deer stand gazing in fascination at the torch, one of the Mayhas creeps round behind them and either spears or hamstringing them.

A similar method is employed for hares, with the exception that a large kind of butterfly-net is used with which to catch them.

Now, a word as to tigers in regard to lamplight. I tried the method, but gave it up decidedly ; for I soon found that a tiger's intelligence was not to be thus insulted, which he demonstrated very forcibly by repeatedly charging and roaring loudly in the direction of the lamp, but always taking good care to keep well out of the circle of light, thus showing very clearly that he knew his own mind on the subject and had no intention of being taken in by any such device. As a rule, they ignored the kill altogether when they saw the lamp, and went straight away never to return ; but on several occasions, when hungry I suppose, they came up and behaved in the way I have mentioned, which, when repeated, soon convinced me of the futility of trying to fool them in the manner that panthers can be in the matter, in spite of the superior reputation that a panther has for cunning.

But panthers, all the world over, are notoriously fearless of artificial light at night, in support of which hundreds of examples can be quoted ; it seems to be a natural trait of theirs, which sportsmen can turn to account.

Since writing the above, an ingenious device has been invented and patented by Mr. Clifford Batten, a well-known sportsman of Mussoorie (India). It is an electric ray rifle-sight and a distant electric lamp, both worked simultaneously on pressing a button at the time of taking aim. The first is priced at Rs. 70, and both combined may be obtained for Rs. 100 from the inventor, or from his agents : The Army and Navy Stores, Bombay.

A clear account of this invention was given in the "Indian Field" on the 4th July 1908, from which I take the liberty of appending here the following extract :—

"A sporting night-sight is an invention recently patented by Mr. Clifford Batten, and is now being placed on the market. The intention is the production of a subdued light over the bait (for a beast of prey) fixed up in a suitable locality, and the illumination of the rifle's foresight to direct the aim.

"From the specifications before us, it appears that this result is obtained by an apparatus consisting of—(1) A small low voltage incandescent lamp in an opaque oblong cover, pierced with a minute hole in the left side, through which a fine ray of light reaches the brightened foresight. The cover is attached to the muzzle by a leather band firmly laced on. The lamp is excited by a small dry-cells battery contained within the switchboard which is clamped under the trigger guard. The illumination of the sight is controlled by a switch attached to the switchboard so conveniently, that only a slight touch from a finger of the trigger hand, moves the tiny ray off and on, without displacing the forefinger from the trigger. (2) A small electric lamp in a bell-shaped receptacle, suspended at such an elevation as to throw a subdued moonlight glow on the bait, and a circular space of a few feet round it. The light is controlled by another switch on the board. By this arrangement the illumination of the foresight and the one over the bait can be worked at the same moment by the trigger hand, without any disturbing movement or noise, a most important point. (3) Wires connect the batteries with the lamp. The one for the foresight runs along the right side of the barrel and is entirely out of the way. The other, on the bait, requires a little arrangement. A convenient branch is necessary for suspending the lamp-holder at the proper elevation over the bait. A cord (an old fishing line by preference) is carried from the *machan* to the opposite branch, the battery wire is taken along it and fixed securely at the point over the bait whence the lamp is suspended. This operation requires some judgment and must be supervised by the sportsman himself. The possibilities of disturbance must be considered—such as the prevailing breeze and the chances of collision. Where wild elephants are present, the

elevation of the lamp must be so calculated as to avoid contact with them.

“The above details are simple enough to explain the working of this effective invention to the general public. Further information can be obtained from the inventor himself or his agents.

“We have seen the night-sight used on four different occasions, when three tigers and a panther were most satisfactorily accounted for. These animals were not in the least scared by the subdued moonlight glow thrown over them. The invention has been gradually worked out by a keen tiger-slayer who has a turn for mechanics, and who has thought out details and improvements mostly while actually in the *machan*, and it has been thoroughly tested before introduction to the sporting public.”



## CHAPTER XXXII.

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### REMINISCENCES OF KAKEN COTTA AND SHIMOGA.

Mysore State, 1875 and 1876.

For the most part of this period I was stationed in the Shimoga District in charge of sandal-works, though the vicissitudes of my service occasionally called me away for short periods to other districts, sometimes to Hunsur, Hassan or Bangalore respectively.

During the last days of the Christmas holidays, that is to say on the 1st January 1875, I find from my diary that I and my wife were members of a party who were the guests of Mr. W. Cunningham, the S.D.O. of Nagar Sub-division, who was afterwards Knighted for his able services on the North-West Frontier.

We were camped on this occasion at a place called Sagar, and the party consisted of Major and Mrs. Gompertz (the former being the I. G , Police), Mr. W. Porteous, Assistant Commissioner, my wife and self, our host and some others whose names I cannot now recall.

We had very good small game shooting during these vacations, but nothing larger than sambar and cheetle were brought to bag ; but as a new-comer to the district, I gathered some very valuable information from the conversation of some of my companions as to the localities in which large game were to be found in the district, which came in very useful to me afterwards, as will be seen later on in this story.

Among other things, I heard it stated that there were a large number of tigers between Sagar and Shikarpur, but that it was impossible to beat them out, on account of the jungles in this area being so dense and level, there being practically no natural leads such as *nallas*, ravines or hills up or to which to beat the tigers. But suspecting that the methods employed might have been wrong, I made a mental note of this locality and determined to pay it a visit on the first opportunity, in order to try what I could do.

When our Christmas party broke up, I took advantage of our nearness to the celebrated Gersoppa Falls, which are about 40 miles from Sagar, to take a few days' leave to see them. So my wife and





I at once set about to make our arrangements, with this object in view.

I should here mention that the Mysore State boasts of a net-work of the finest roads in the world, the macadamized portion of a large number of these roads sloping from the centre to some 33 feet on either side, forming a breadth of about 66 feet across ; besides this on either side of the macadamized road and parallel to it, on each side ran unmetalled or *katcha* roads, which alone the country carts were permitted by rules to use while carrying heavy country goods, for the centre macadamized portion was strictly reserved for superior light traffic.

The majority of these roads are lined with a double row of magnificent trees or, as in some portions of the States, by clumps of " Katang " bambus, which meet overhead, forming dense shade, so that the traveller may drive during the heat of the day for miles without needing to wear his sun-hat. Such are the roads, for instance, from Shimoga to Sagar, Shimoga to Tirthully, Kaken Cotta to the Western Ghats leading to Cannanore.

The roadside trees consist largely of several species of *Ficus*, such as the peepal (*Ficus religiosa*), parkar, banyan, and gooler ; also jack-fruit, mango and mirabolans (*Hurra*), all well known to the Anglo-Indian. It will be noticed that these trees are for the most part ever-green as well as fruit-bearing, with the result that thousands of birds of every variety are attracted to them, and may be seen at all times of the year throughout the length of these perfect roads for hundreds of miles ; so that to a lover of nature, the task of travelling on these roads is one of endless enjoyment.

To improve matters still further, the State's government had built excellent staging bungalows at intervals of about 12 miles along these roads, fully furnished in every detail even to crockery marked with the Raja's crest. So the traveller had only need to take his clothes and bedding with him and could even dispense with servants, as each bungalow was in charge of a competent Khansama.

When going on a long journey, the roads being so good, I found that the most comfortable as well as economical mode of travelling was to get a common country bullock-cart and to place into the bottom of it a thick layer of small green branches cut off fresh from the

trees, and on top of them to place my mattress and bedding, so that, though the cart itself had no springs, yet the layer of small branches and twigs under the mattress served the same purpose, and formed a deliciously comfortable couch, saving one from the effects of all annoying vibrations and jars. The bullocks used for the purpose of drawing these carts were of the famous trotting breed, called the "Amat-Mahal" bullocks famed all over India, their native breeding ground being the Mysore States.

These bullocks stand about 14 hands high and have a stately carriage, something like that of a stag and have no dewlap, and can trot along at the rate of seven miles an hour without difficulty.

All the traveller has to do is to notify on ahead to the Tehsildar or Local Magistrate, the time, date and place at which he will require a change of bullocks, and he will find them ready for him at each stage as he arrives at them, the rates charged being, at least in those days, only one anna per mile for each pair of bullocks. It was under the above conditions that my wife and I journeyed from Sagar to the Gersoppa Falls.

We started from Sagar after dinner in the cool of the night, and with the exception of one spill on the road, when a pair of young and untrained "Amat-Mahal" bullocks ran off the road with the cart, we arrived without incident at the Gersoppa Falls Dāk Bungalow in the early morning about 6 A.M., and found that tea and *chota-hazri* had been got ready for us.

After *chota-hazri*, we walked to "Watson's Seat" (named after a former Governor of Bombay) which overlooked the Falls, of which there were three: the "Rajah," the "Roarer" and the "Dame Blanche." It was noted in the Dāk Bungalow Book which was rich in autograph, dating back for some 50 years or so, that a Naval Officer once measured the depth of these Falls by first slinging a hawser across and then plumbed them and found them to be 900 odd feet in depth.

Looking down the river, "Watson's Seat" was on the right bank and was on a level with the top of the Falls and consisted of a large flat slab of rock jutting out into space.

From this spot, however, the face of the Falls was invisible; all we could see was an enormous volume of water thundering in a solid

mass over the brink, while below, was a seething white caldron, over and in front of which there circled thousands of blue-rock pigeon.

In order to see the face of these Falls to full advantage, we had to proceed lower down the river, and then cross it below the Falls on a ferry, and then up again on the left bank till we reached an enormous mass of rocks which sloped down to the foot of the Falls. This slope, however, was rather steep and dangerous to negotiate, but here we found, in order to facilitate the descent, that a rough kind of ladder had been formed down the face of the rocks, the material consisting of two chains made of rattan cane loops, with bambu wrungs fixed in the loops between the two chains. But as a great many of the wrungs were wanting, it was terrible work for a lady, and when my wife, after tumbling and slipping alternately, at last reached the bottom, she nearly fainted ; but some brandy, which I had luckily with me in a flask, soon recovered her sufficiently to enjoy the scene before her.

We were now at the foot of these Falls, which came thundering down from a height of over 900 feet above us, in a manner which was truly appalling ; of course, speech was out of the question on account of the deafening din caused by the roar of the falling waters. But what speech or pen could picture the beauty and grandeur of the sight that was now before our eyes ; the glorious rainbows and ever changing hues in the vapour caused by the rays of the sun falling on them ; the fantastic and ghostly figures and shadows, which came and went, and came again and again ; chasing each other into the gloom of vast abysses, faster than either eye or imagination could follow them. This delicate blending of colours of those ghostly forms, combined with this magnificent exposition of the might and majesty of Nature, completely awed us for the time being and made us realize the impotence of puny man.

Impotence, did I say ? but alas ! for man can destroy what he cannot create, for if what I hear is true, the glory of the Gersoppa Falls is now a thing of the past, the water, it is said, having been drawn off for irrigation purposes.

Some months after our visit here a friend wrote to tell us that " Watson's Seat " had been the scene of an awful tragedy, for a young lady on a visit to this spot, having had a tiff with her lover, threw

herself down these terrible Falls. Of course she was killed instantly, and though her companions could see, with their glasses, the body of the poor girl being whirled about in the eddy below the Falls, nothing could be done to recover it.

Our return up the rattan ladder was even more difficult than the descent ; but we considered that our troubles had been well repaid by the memory of the grand sight which we carried away with us. We returned to Sagar on the same day and reached there in time for dinner, having spent a most enjoyable day.

Soon after our visit to the Gersoppa Falls, I was temporarily transferred to another part of the Mysore Provinces, in the neighbourhood of Kaken Cotta in the District of Mysore proper, on the high road to Cannanore.

It will be remembered that it was in these Kaken Cotta forests that Sanderson built, in connection with his Elephant Kheddass, his bungalow called by him "Morley Hall," mentioned in his book "Thirteen Years Among the Wild Beasts of India." But the time of which I am now writing, was before that of Elephant Kheddass or "Morley Hall."

We arrived at Kaken Cotta at the beginning of the hot weather and took up our quarters in the Kaken Cotta forest bungalow, which is situated on the bank of the river Kabhany amidst dense primeval forests. With the exception of a few temporary huts dotted about in the vast forests, inhabited by a very wild jungle tribe called the "Moplas," there was not a single village or other human habitation within about 20 miles of our "Palace," as we called it. So it will be seen that our party, of a necessity, had to be a self-dependent one, as far as supplies, etc., went, and we lived for the most part entirely on what I was able to obtain by my gun ; but the latter was more than sufficient for all our needs.

I should here remark, however, that our "Palace" was also situated on the side of the high road that led to Cannanore, which here cleft through the heart of these magnificent forests, and was to us an endless source of recreation and amusement, for in our spare time we could drive either way along it for miles under dense shade of the overhanging forest trees and bambus, seeing, and sometimes shooting, all kinds and varieties of game, with the additional excitement

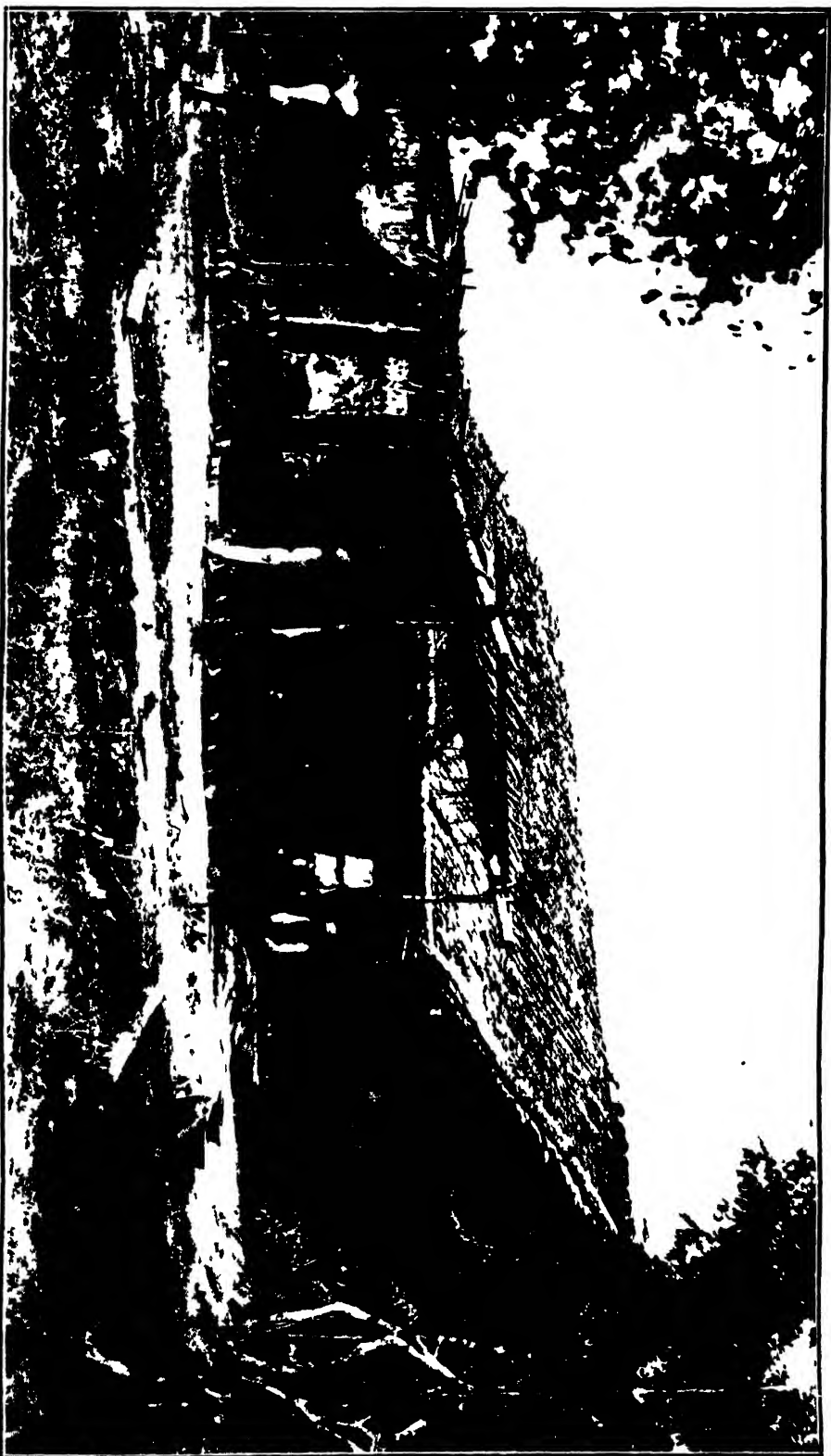


PHOTO OF THE ORIGINAL "TUNNEL," 1878





of the possibility of being attacked or held up by rogue elephants, of which there were several about. However, it was not necessary to go far for game ; in fact on one occasion I shot from the verandah of our house, a stag sambar which ran through the compound with wild dogs after him, while on several occasions I shot from the verandah and windows of the house, pea-fowl and jungle-fowl, when we required them for the table.

We soon had reason to be acquainted with the presence of wild elephants. As mentioned before, the river Kabhany ran immediately below our "Palace," and the weather being hot, wild elephants came down in herds regularly every night to bathe in the deep and cool water which ran below our bungalow.

Their trumpeting and roarings were often so great, that they sometimes kept us awake all night. Eventually familiarity with them bred contempt, but we had always to be on the look-out, for though the majority of them were harmless and timid, yet some of them were rogues who used to attack human beings at sight without any provocation. One of these, in particular, was a notorious one, known far and wide afterwards as the "Kaken Cotta Rogue," shot three years afterwards, with the permission of Government, by Sanderson, the account of which is given in his book.

At this time, however, we were helpless, as it was against the law to shoot an elephant unless he was proclaimed by Government, and at that time this one had not yet been proclaimed, though he had already killed a number of persons. I reported the matter officially and applied for permission to kill this brute ; but the authorities concerned delayed to such an extent, that though my application was eventually sanctioned, the permission did not reach me until after I had left the District on my transfer back to Shimoga.

In the meanwhile, I could have shot this rogue a dozen times or more. Our first acquaintance with him was when we were seated one evening in front of our "Palace". It was almost quite dark, when suddenly in front of us, about 50 yards off we heard "whiff!" a sound like the sudden escape of steam, but we knew instantly that it came from the trunk of an elephant ; at the same time all our dogs began to bark violently, and things were beginning to get uncomfortably warm, for in front of us loomed the enormous figure

of the rogue elephant, advancing with his trunk up, evidently contemplating an attack on ourselves and our fragile "Palace," which we knew he could as easily knock down as a pack of cards, if he chose.

Rushing in I snatched up my rifle and cartridges, and after arming all the servants with fire-brands, we advanced to drive off the enemy. For some time, however, he stood his ground and challenged us and refused to budge. I hesitated to fire at him in the uncertain light for fear of only wounding him which might enrage and cause him to attack us and our frail house in real earnest, and possibly kill some of us in the confusion. So I withheld my fire and determined to show a bold front, though I fired several shots in the air from a spare gun. At length our attitude prevailed, and after failing to frighten us away by trumpeting and roaring at us, he gave it up and moved off in a very unamiable frame of mind.

We had more alarms during the night, for he returned several times, evidently being in a particularly bad temper that night and bent on venting his spleen on somebody or something, and we had to turn out in a body and face him as before, and each time prevailed with much greater ease than on the first occasion.

About 3 o'clock in the morning we heard him behind the house about 200 yards off, screaming and roaring as if he had gone mad, and we guessed he must have found something on which he was venting his fury. In the morning, we went to the spot and found it trampled and dug up with his tusks for yards round.

It appeared that at this spot a black blanket had been left, which had belonged to a man who had died near by of cholera on the day before. The old rogue in his peregrinations round our house, trying to find a weak spot for attack, had apparently come across this blanket on the ground, and thinking, in his blind fury, that it was a man, he rushed and knelt on it, prodded it **through** and through, driving his tusks deep into the ground in doing so, and then snatching the blanket up in his trunk he tore it into shreds and shied it all around, bits of which were found hanging about on the trees and bambus round about. This shows what would have happened had this fiend come across a man.

And yet, had I shot him, before he was proclaimed, in order to prevent him committing damage and loss of life of which he was

afterwards guilty, as I very easily could have done, I would have been fined without mercy for my presumption to the amount of Rs. 500.

A few days after the above incident, a couple of Mopla lads, who were brothers, after taking as usual from me their daily wage proceeded home to their huts in the jungles.

Half an hour later one of them returned and threw himself breathless at my feet, crying "Arni! Ai Arni!" which means "the elephant! Oh the elephant!" When I at length got the story from the terrified lad, I learnt that as they were going along the jungle path, the rogue elephant suddenly appeared before them and with spread-out ears and curled trunk rushed at them; they turned and fled, but his brother catching his foot in a rattan creeper, fell down flat on his face right in front of the elephant, and what followed was witnessed by the other lad from behind a tree, where he had taken refuge. Before the fallen Mopla could move, the elephant was on him, and placing one huge foot in the middle of his back he curled his trunk round the upper part of his body and literally tore him in two.

In connection with the attack on our "Palace" I should here mention, that shortly after our departure, two coffee planters were seated one evening in front of this building, when suddenly the old rogue elephant, without giving them time to make any arrangements, at once charged them.

They rushed into the house with the huge elephant after them, who in his rush carried away the whole of one wing of the house such as it was, while his intended victims escaped by the back way and got up some big trees. After this Government ordered a wide ditch, fifteen feet deep, to be dug round the little bungalow.

This old rogue also had a good deal of method in his madness. He soon discovered that country carts travelling along the road, often carried articles which were eminently to his lordship's taste, such as *gur* (unrefined cane sugar), tamarind, and other delicacies; consequently, he adopted the rôle of a highway robber of the most regular and pronounced type.

His method was to waylay country carts, appearing suddenly in front of the bullocks, who usually thereupon broke loose and

decamped, leaving the cart at the mercy of the depredator, while the cartmen, from their refuge in the neighbouring trees, would see the choicest delicacies being rudely huddled out of their bags by this monster and rapidly disposed of with winks and smiles and other signs of satisfaction depicted on the face of his excellency, to whom a cart-load of *gur* by no means came amiss.

Should he, however, by mistake, hold up a cart that contained nothing to his taste, he wreaked his vengeance by completely destroying the cart and everything in it, including the bullocks, should they unfortunately have failed to break loose from their yokes ; while if he succeeded in obtaining a satisfactory meal, he never did any further damage, but departed in a good temper.

The mile-stones along the roadsides were evidently a great eyesore to him, for he invariably put his foot on and broke them wherever he saw them. With regard to carts, however, one day he made a mistake. A worthy "Padri" happened to be travelling along in a closed cart, when he suddenly woke up to find an elephant's trunk thrust through the window ; so seizing his shot gun, he fired it into the elephant's face, upon which the latter made off ; but, half a mile or so further on, he again turned up this time in front of the bullocks, who immediately upset the cart and broke loose ; while his "Reverence" escaped by the practical though undignified method of hastily swarming up a large tree, reminding him no doubt of his bird-nesting days and other elevating thoughts, including his present position, whence he contemplated the affectionate attentions bestowed on him by his novel and self-invited congregation in the person of the elephant below. As there were no other witnesses, it is an open question as to what was the text of the "Sermon to the elephant" preached by the worthy Padri, from his rather unusually elevated pulpit, or as to what the chosen language was in which he addressed it ; there were no witnesses ! Suffice it to say, the elephant must have been greatly edified, for he kept the worthy gentleman on his precarious branch for several hours.

The bare facts of this incident were told me by the reverend gentleman himself, though, I admit, the words and manner of telling are my own.

When Sanderson eventually killed this rogue three years later, he placed the head by the side of the road that travellers might see it and know that the rogue was at last dead.

At the present day I know of another rogue of the most pronounced type, an old bull-elephant, who still ranges at his sweet will from the Mohan Pass to Hurdwar, and the Ganges Valley between Hurdwar and Rikhikhes, attacking every human being, cart or cattle, whom he meets.

The natives of those parts know this "Ek Danta" (*i.e.*, one tusk) well, a number of whom, I hear, have been killed by him. I have reason to believe, from personal acquaintance with this brute, that the tales I heard regarding his character are true, though I never went to the length of actually verifying these statements, except by what I was personally told by the inhabitants of localities favoured by his presence.

In January 1902, my son and I were out shooting on the left bank of the Ganges opposite Gauri Ghat, when one morning my son who, with a few men was out stalking cheetle, about 800 yards to my left, suddenly came upon a wild bull-elephant; thinking that the elephant would, as they usually do, make off on discovering their presence, he stood still and was admiring him, when suddenly the bull who had only one tusk, curled up his trunk and charged straight at him. Remembering a remark of mine, being dressed in khaki, he at once crouched down close to a clump of dead bambus, thinking that the elephant would be sure to give chase to the men who were then bolting on all sides. The elephant, however, passed close to the bambu clump and evidently smelt the presence of a human being there, and stopping dead, he stretched out his trunk over the clump and began to smell him out.

Fearing the consequence of shooting an unproclaimed elephant, and trusting to the fleetness of his feet, he dashed out from almost under the trunk of the elephant and sprinted up an animal track, doing, as he afterwards told me, the best hundred yards he ever did in his life, with the elephant screeching after him like a railway engine; the latter's progress, however, was impeded by numerous trees and, after a while, he gave it up, though he continued the chase at a slower

decamped, leaving the cart at the mercy of the depredator, while the cartmen, from their refuge in the neighbouring trees, would see the choicest delicacies being rudely huddled out of their bags by this monster and rapidly disposed of with winks and smiles and other signs of satisfaction depicted on the face of his excellency, to whom a cart-load of *gur* by no means came amiss.

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At the present day I know of another rogue of the most pronounced type, an old bull-elephant, who still ranges at his sweet will from the Mohan Pass to Hurdwar, and the Ganges Valley between Hurdwar and Rikhikhes, attacking every human being, cart or cattle, whom he meets.

The natives of those parts know this "Ek Danta" (*i.e.*, one tusk) well, a number of whom, I hear, have been killed by him. I have reason to believe, from personal acquaintance with this brute, that the tales I heard regarding his character are true, though I never went to the length of actually verifying these statements, except by what I was personally told by the inhabitants of localities favoured by his presence.

In January 1902, my son and I were out shooting on the left bank of the Ganges opposite Gauri Ghat, when one morning my son who, with a few men was out stalking cheetle, about 800 yards to my left, suddenly came upon a wild bull-elephant; thinking that the elephant would, as they usually do, make off on discovering their presence, he stood still and was admiring him, when suddenly the bull who had only one tusk, curled up his trunk and charged straight at him. Remembering a remark of mine, being dressed in khaki, he at once crouched down close to a clump of dead bambus, thinking that the elephant would be sure to give chase to the men who were then bolting on all sides. The elephant, however, passed close to the bambu clump and evidently smelt the presence of a human being there, and stopping dead, he stretched out his trunk over the clump and began to smell him out.

Fearing the consequence of shooting an unproclaimed elephant, and trusting to the fleetness of his feet, he dashed out from almost under the trunk of the elephant and sprinted up an animal track, doing, as he afterwards told me, the best hundred yards he ever did in his life, with the elephant screeching after him like a railway engine; the latter's progress, however, was impeded by numerous trees and, after a while, he gave it up, though he continued the chase at a slower



pace for over a mile, which was a very unusual thing, which only an exceptionally vicious rogue would be capable of.

A few weeks after this, I heard that a cartman, who was walking in front of his cart along the Hurdwar-Dehra Doon road, met this rogue, and thinking it was a tame elephant belonging to a local Raja, who was then camped in this neighbourhood, he went forward to drive it off so that it should not frighten his bullock.

The rogue, of course, at once seized him and dashed his brains out and then broke every bone in his body.

The last time I saw this "Ek Danta" was in May 1904, standing in the "Rau" of Chillawalla between Mohan and Hurdwar; but it was from a safe distance on this occasion, and we beat a hasty retreat to save unpleasantness, for, had he attacked me, I would have been obliged to shoot him, for I am not now at an age for running.

I believe he is still at large, and yet nothing, to my knowledge, is being done to destroy this standing menace to the lives and comfort of both sportsmen and the inhabitants of the country. But I have digressed.

In the Kaken Cotta forests there were hundreds of wild elephants, who, with the exception of females with young and an occasional rogue, were inoffensive, though their timidity to a great extent was wearing off after years of artificial protection from harm.

One morning, while inspecting some forests, I suddenly found myself in the midst of a large herd of wild elephants, and in consequence took refuge out of reach up a large *teak* tree.

They were perfectly well aware of my presence, but were not in the least alarmed, frequently coming to my tree and putting up their trunks to smell me.

I counted 33 in all, besides a number of calves, and though they kept me up the tree for over two hours before they moved off, I was kept highly amused all the time by the extraordinary antics and gambols of the young ones.

In these forests, however, I was unable to indulge in my favourite sport, namely, beating for tigers, for though there were lots of them about, I could not obtain the beaters, for, as before stated, there were no villages.





It was not till I got back again to Shimoga, early in the following year, that I was again able to beat for tigers.

We will now change the scene back to Shimoga, the time being early in the year 1876. I was now placed again on sandal inspection duty, one of my depôts being at Sagar and another at Shikarpur.

It will be seen that I was now not a District Officer in the ordinary sense of the term, but was an inspecting or visiting officer attached temporarily to the District, to check the weighments of sandal wood at certain fixed depôts ; so I had no large staff of subordinates at my command and, consequently, no local influence ; while my duty lay only in the neighbourhood of certain fixed depôts, I was only free to shoot whatever I could manage to pick up in their vicinity, being unable to get away to other and perhaps better shooting grounds of the District.

It will be remembered that I had made a mental note of some conversation that I had overheard in the early part of the previous year, regarding the difficulties in beating any of the numerous tigers that were said to exist in the forests between Sagar and Shikarpur.

I had depôts to inspect at both these places, so I determined to inspect them at once, and to take things easy while I was passing through the forests between them.

The following are some notes taken from my Diary of that period :—

- 8-2-76, Camp Anior.—Shot a tigress.
- 10-3-76, Camp Birapura.—Shot two tigers. One 9' 4", the other larger.
- 11-3-76, Camp Birapura.—Shot one tiger.
- 19-3-76, Camp Eetkahalli.—Shot a tigress.
- 3-4-76, Camp Shikarpur.—Shot a tigress, 8' 4".
- 6-4-76, Camp Shikarpur.—Shot a large panther.
- 9-4-76, Camp Birapura.—Shot a large male tiger, 9' 7".

These places on an average are about 10 miles apart, while Anior was about 40 miles as far as I can remember, so it cannot be said that my success was due to luck in getting them in one favourable spot.

It will be noticed that, from the above extract of my diary, after picking up the tigress at Anior, I succeeded in beating out and killing within the exact period of one month, namely, from 10th March 1876 to 9th April 1876, six tigers and one panther ; this in a place where it was emphatically stated that it was next to impossible to successfully beat out these tigers. I had no subordinate staff to help me nor any official help. I had no local knowledge, no shikaries, and my time was limited, yet how did I succeed ?

I maintain that the answer lies in the method of shooting employed. In Part II of this chapter I propose, with the aid of sketch maps, giving, as far as possible, a detailed account of the manner in which some of these tigers were brought to book.

## PART II.

Diary, 9th March 1876.—Camp Birapura.

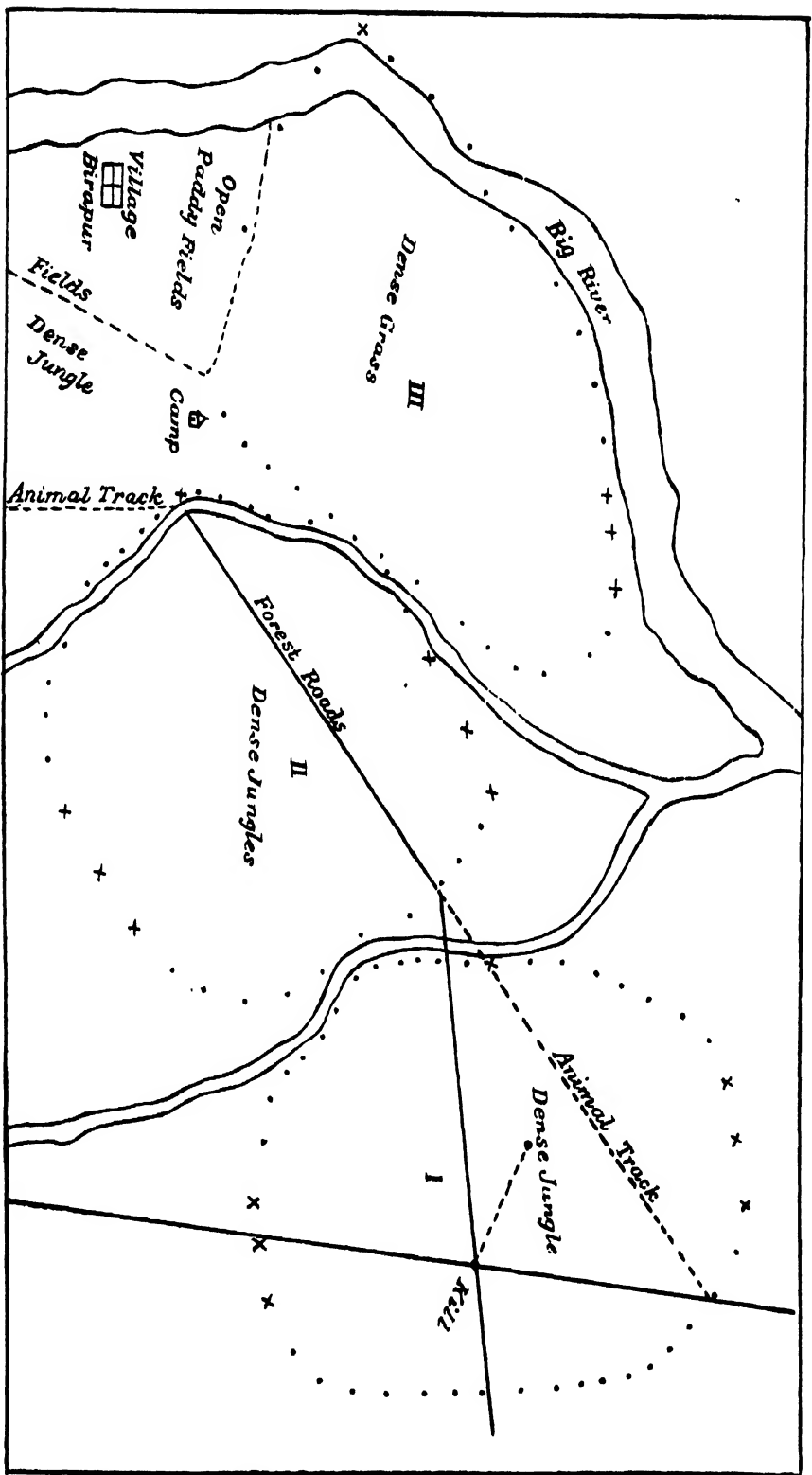
I myself tied out overnight five buffaloes in the jungles near this village, and in the morning marched my camp there also.

On arriving, found that there had been a kill (at point marked K on sketch). I placed myself for the first beat A on an animal track, but the stops let the tiger through.

Not to be done, I traced the tiger up and located it in the area between the two *nallas* shown on the sketch map as the "No. 2 Beat" The jungle here was very dense and extensive, so it was immaterial almost as to which direction I beat him. So I chose a spot B, only 200 yards from my camp, on the banks of a deep but dry *nalla*, where I placed my ladder.

Until some time after the beat commenced not a thing appeared, when suddenly I saw one of the stops throw his axe at a large male tiger who, frightened at this sudden action, came roaring down at a gallop towards me and took the deep *nalla* in front of me at a bound, which I afterwards measured, and found it to be 24 feet from bank to bank.

I fired as he was in mid-air and the bullet struck him at the junction of the neck with the shoulders ; so, though his fore feet reached the opposite bank, he slid back into the *nalla* below and lay there gasping. My wife, hearing the shot, came rushing out of the tents and was in time to see the monster expire.



BIRAPUR.



I see from my diary that he was a heavy male tiger, measuring 9 feet 4 inches.

The stops then informed me that after my shot, another tiger had broken through their line.

Hearing this, I determined to try for him also as soon as I had a cup of tea and a smoke at my camp.

This I did, hoping the other tiger would not have crossed the river to the west as there was better cover on the nearer side.

I should have mentioned that I had very few men and stops as, without official help, the villagers for the most part refused to come.

For the third and last beat I could only afford 12 men as stops, so I took advantage of an open patch of ploughed fields which lay to the north of the village, and placed my ladder (at point S) across the river so that the open fields lay to my right front, thus doing away with the necessity of many stops in that direction, for of course the tiger would not ordinarily face them in broad daylight.

As soon as the beat started, I saw a large male tiger walking along in the fringe of the long grass and jungle on the top of the high bank opposite, across the deep water of the river in front of me. He stopped to listen to the beaters for a few moments and then, without hesitation, he jumped down about 12 feet with a splash into deep water below, and swimming strongly, headed straight in my direction.

On reaching my bank, he shook himself like a big dog, after which he quietly trotted on right up to the foot of my ladder without the least suspicion of my presence. I was so close to him when I fired, that I actually saw the skin open out where the solid 12-bore bullet struck him at the junction of the neck with his shoulders, the same shot as the one early in the day. It killed him, of course, instantaneously, though I gave him another shot to make sure.

This was a larger and heavier tiger than the first, but for some reason or other I omitted entering his measurements in my diary.

Diary, 11th March 1876.—Camp Birapura.

Got another kill, this time to the south of the village.

On examining the kill, I found by the footmarks that there were a party of three tigers, two young males about three years old, and the third, a large tigress, probably the mother of the other two. I



arranged the beat in the usual way, and as soon as it commenced, I saw three tigers heading quietly towards me all together.

I fired first at one of the males who was leading and dropped him dead, while the other male immediately broke back ; but the tigress rushed roaring past me to my right, giving me an awkward right hand shot ; however, I emptied my left barrel into her, but hit her too far back.

After securing the male tiger I shot first, I went after the wounded tigress and, though I hunted for her for two days, I could not find her or any traces after the blood stopped flowing.

Diary, 19th March 1876 —Camp Eetkahalli.

Learnt that a certain Colonel M. had been lately beating these jungles, but without success.

“ Heard that he had been tying out, for economy's sake, aged and diseased cattle, with the result that he could get no kills, and small wonder. Had some fat young buffs tied and got a kill at once.”

In the meanwhile, a certain European Engineer, whom we will call Mr. I., turned up, so I asked him to join me in my shoot, but he only scoffed at the idea and offered to take me on at 2 to 1 in ten rupees, that I would not shoot a tiger anywhere in that part of the country, within twenty days.

I took the bet and went off alone, as he refused to come with me “ on a wild-geese-chase ” as he said.

On my way to the kill, a party of natives met me and asked me to kindly let them see me kill a tiger, having heard of my success at Birapura, eight miles away.

Not wishing to offend them, I agreed, though I was afraid they would prove to be rather in the way.

On inspecting the kill, I found that I had to deal with a very large tigress.

I placed the self-invited party on a large tree to my right, whence they would be able to get a good view of all that happened when the tiger appeared.

I made them promise to sit perfectly silent, but unfortunately omitted to tell them also not to, on any account, move or make any sign. Soon after the beat commenced, I saw the tigress in the distance coming steadily and quietly, straight on in my direction, and was

anticipating an easy shot, when the party to my right also caught sight of the tiger and, foolishly, began frantically waving a large white cloth as a sign to me that the tiger was coming towards me, a fact I was already fully aware of.

Of course the tiger saw them and made off to the left, where she broke forcibly through the stops.

There was no time to tell the party in question what I thought of them, though I am afraid my silence on the subject at the time was somewhat profane.

I at once determined to intercept the tigress, if possible, without delay.

Taking a few men with me as stops, I started off at a run to take up a position on ahead, telling the beaters to give me quarter of an hour's law, and then to continue beating.

I was leading at a run along a forest footpath, with a man behind me carrying my gun, when suddenly I came face to face with a large tigress. She at once put her ears and lips back and spat at me like a cat—so standing still, I beckoned with my hand behind me for my gun, and for a wonder the man pushed it into my hand.

In the meanwhile, the tigress maintained her undecided attitude but the moment I cocked my gun and put it to my shoulder, she gave a tremendous bound off the footpath to the right, but I was too quick for her, and, before she could escape, hit her fairly behind her shoulder.

Rushing forward to keep her in sight, I was just in time to see her painfully scramble up the bank of a small *nalla*, where she came to a halt with her body propped up against a tree, and in this position I gave her another shot which brought her rolling down the bank again into the bed of the *nalla*, where, after a few moments' struggle in which she tore and bit her own paws, she expired. I proceeded with the beat, however, on the off-chance that there was another tiger; but with the exception of a flying shot at a panther, which I missed like a man, nothing else turned up, so the tigress I had secured must have been the one I was after.

I wrote and informed L., who had moved on. He replied, taking me on again on the same terms, to which I replied: "Done with you, dry-salter."

Diary, 26th March 1876.—Camp Seralkoop.

Two men came from the village of Bellgooty and complained that a man-eating tigress had taken up her quarters in the vicinity of their village, and had killed and carried off several persons. As I had some work on hand, I was not able to proceed to Bellgooty till the 30th March.

On arriving at Bellgooty, I was shown a clump of American aloes in the middle of a cotton field, miles away from any jungles, as being the abode of the man-eating tigress. I could scarcely believe it, though the villagers were positive and said the tigress had killed and dragged the bodies of the two men into this very clump on the 26th instant, while they were in the act of picking cotton in this field. After failing to get any results by firing off guns and fireworks, etc., in order to drive the tigress out, I proceeded to have the aloes cut down, keeping guard the while.

It was tedious work, for the area covered was about an acre ; however, there were many willing hands at work, anxious to be rid of the pest.

At last we reached the centre, and here, as I had been previously told, we found a large pit in the ground, an old disused sugar press, fresh human bones, clothes and hair littered the ground, and in the midst was the decaying corpse of a tiger-cub about four months old. The tigress, however, was gone ; she had evidently deserted the place with the remainder of her cubs, on the death of one of her progeny. Knowing her to be a man-eater, I did my utmost to track her up, but with the exception of hearing of her temporary presence in a *parn* garden, I failed entirely to find any traces of her and was obliged to give up the chase.

The 3rd April 1876 found me again at Shikarpur. A kill was reported  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles away. Proceeding to the spot, found I had to deal with a tigress. The beat was arranged in the usual way, but was mismanaged, there being too much noise, owing to not having experienced men of my own to accompany the beaters, with the result that the tigress broke at a fast gallop.

I knocked her over, however, but hit her too far back. But she went head over heels like a rabbit, and then, picking herself up, got into a thicket where she put up. I immediately ringed

her round with men up trees to watch her, while I formed my plans.

It happened that through this thicket ran a small canal of water, about 3 feet wide and 4 feet deep, so I determined to use this in order to try and stalk her, for I felt certain that she would not anticipate danger from within the water, and that her attention would be certain to be directed in some other direction, so that if I proceeded quietly in the water up the bed of the channel, keeping my head well below its banks, it might be possible for me to get quite close without being seen, from whence I could give her her quietus.

This I did, taking off my hat and proceeding alone, as it was a dangerous job. My progress was slow, for I knew that my life depended on my movements being absolutely noiseless, but the intense excitement of the situation rendered the journey anything but tedious.

The sun striking on my bare head (for it was April), the discomforts of my wet and cramped position, all passed unnoticed.

When I reached to what I thought was about the centre of the thicket, I cautiously raised my head above the banks of the channel. As I did so, a cry almost escaped me, though what I saw was only what I had been expecting to see all the time, but hardly at such close quarters; for there, scarcely ten feet from me, was the tigress lying, looking away from me with her head between her paws, her tail switching angrily, clearly full of mischief, and evidently expecting me to come from the direction in which she could see and hear the men up the trees.

She did not see me, at least so I thought; I bobbed down again with the intention of collecting myself and raising my rifle.

When I raised myself again, this time with my rifle at my shoulder, I found myself to my surprise face to face with the infuriated brute, who, Heaven knows how, had discovered my presence.

She immediately drew back her ears and lips and spat at me, flattening herself to the ground for her spring. In another moment she would have been on top of my head.

But she never left the ground, for at the same moment I fired, feeling, as many other sportsmen who have been in similar situations can testify, perfectly cool and collected, with the result that the bullet,

a "spherical," sped true, striking her on the nose, passing through her mouth and neck and into her vitals.

She simply dropped her head, her tail went up and waved convulsively for a moment, then a tremour passed through her body and I knew I was no longer in danger.

This happened on the village lands of Bussenah, near Suyeehully,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Shikarpur.

She was a beautiful beast, measuring 8 feet 4 inches and about 7 years old.

I wrote and informed I., who thereupon again took me on the same terms as before.

Diary, 6th April 1876.—Kill reported at the village of Khapper, 3 miles from Shikarpur; proceeded to the place and found that buff had been killed, not by a tiger, but by a large panther.

Beat for and bagged him; gave no trouble, coming out quite quietly and straightforwardly; a very large male.

After the beat, some men reported that near by a tigress had some small cubs in an old deserted *supari* garden below a tank.

Being keen on securing some tiger cubs, I at once went to the spot and found it as described, only overgrown with cane, bushes, and dense thorns, and intersected with water-channels from the tank above. One of the men went with me part of the way up one of these channels and then pointed out a beaten track, tunnelled either by pig or tiger under the overhanging cane fronds and thorn bushes, saying that it led to the den of the tigress where I would find the cubs. I had to crawl on my hands and knees along this track, keeping my gun well in front, as I expected to be charged every moment.

I finally reached a large kind of kennel, which smelt unmistakably of the feline tribe. But here, to my disgust, I found that I had been carrying my life in my hands; for what? for four *panther* cubs.

I *was* disgusted. However, I secured them, and was making a somewhat anxious and hasty retreat, when suddenly I heard a tremendous commotion about 300 yards off in the direction of the tank, and I knew by the roar that the panther was venting her temper on some one, so ran to the rescue. But by the time I arrived, the panther had again vanished.





It appeared that an inoffensive old Brahmin had been seated at the edge of the tank, washing his teeth with the bruised end of a stick, when the panther suddenly sprang out of the jungle and bit him on the shoulder, and then bolted back again. Now, why did this panther go for the poor inoffensive old man instead of going for me, who was the real offender? Probably she had seen my stealthy movements, which, therefore, made her suspicious and alarmed her, so, trusting to the thickness of the jungle to successfully hide her small cubs, she had made off, but when her maternal instinct began to prick her conscience and enraged her, she took advantage of an obviously safe object on which to vent her wrath, and did so.

Now, here is a case in point of the different temperaments of individual animals; 999 panthers out of 1,000, in a similar situation, would have attacked the intruder without the slightest hesitation.

But this case was the exception. Here was a panther evidently of a more timid nature; yet when instinct began to trouble her, she vented her rage in a manner that instinct again told her was the safest, though I have not the slightest doubt that had this very beast become aware that I knew of the whereabouts of her cubs, she would never have left them and would have attacked me with the utmost ferocity, for which I was prepared. These subtle allowances for individualities of animals can be better understood by sportsmen who are born sportsmen and not made, who are sportsmen by instinct and nature, who are alive to the minutest details of nature around them, and are in the closest sympathy and touch with them.

But it is a fool-hardy game, at the best of times to go on foot into either a tiger's or panther's den to obtain her cubs.

I learnt with severe cause later on, that such and similar games are *not worth the candle*, for even if you get over it, whenever there is a little electricity in the air, the old wounds cause excruciating agony. Well, well, it has got to be so now to the end, for there is no altering it *now*; but let others beware and *take my word for it*, that the exquisite privilege of being a dunderheaded ass for five minutes is not worth the years of agony that follow.

But I am digressing again.



Diary, 7th April 1876.—I was obliged to track the jungles and tie out my buffs myself, as I could trust no one. Suspected jealousy to be at work from some quarters.

8th April.—Found tracks of a very large male tiger entering a thick patch of jungle to the east of camp, so tied out five buffs myself.

Further on, tracks, on the road, *after* the rain, of four more tigers.

9th April.—A kill reported, found to be the big tiger.

Beaters were collected, as far as possible, from other villages. Put up all the stops myself and arranged the beat as usual. Tiger came out like a gentleman and died to the first bullet.

This was the largest tiger I shot in the District, and measured as follows : Length, 9 feet 7 inches ; height at shoulder, 49 inches ; neck circumference, 38 inches ; head, 42 inches ; body, 64 inches ; forearm, 19 inches ; wrist, 12 inches ; paws, 13 inches. Wrote and informed I. that he now owed me Rs. 60, but he had had enough of it and did not offer to take me on again after this.

On the 13th April I got another kill, but this time the stops deliberately let the tiger go through.

My time was now up and I had to return to head-quarters, making a solemn vow that the next occasion I came to this locality, I would bring a number of my own trained men with me, in which case I anticipated no difficulty in bagging perhaps a score of tigers within a month in this neighbourhood, for the jungles were full of them, and a more unsophisticated lot of tigers I never met.

But I never again got a chance of another fling at them, for soon after I was transferred away from the district and shortly afterwards I was again posted back to my old diggings, the Central Provinces.

However, I had not done so badly under the circumstances as they were, for I beat out and killed six tigers and one panther within the exact period of one month, besides losing at least three others. This, in jungles where it was positively stated that it was next to impossible to successfully beat for tigers. I had no local knowledge of the jungles, no official help, nor influence whatever.

The secret lay first and foremost in the method of shooting adopted, and secondly, in the fact that I saw to every detail in person, as I could trust no one.

The jungles here were very extensive and dense, but tigers and game were very plentiful, and I have little doubt that much the same conditions prevail in this neighbourhood to the present day.

Yet, strange to say, that it was in these very jungles that a big shoot which was arranged for Lord Kitchener, only a few months ago, failed miserably.

The fact that His Excellency was invited to shoot in these jungles, shows that there must be a number of tigers still to the fore here ; and they are likely to be to the fore yet for many years to come, for in my opinion the failure to beat them out, even on so auspicious an occasion, shows clearly that the science of tiger-beating has not made much advance in Mysore Province during the last 30 years.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### “THE DHUNWHAI TIGER.”

Dhunwhai. District Mandla, 1893.

In tiger-shooting we usually have to work very hard to attain success, so it is a bit annoying after having taken a lot of trouble, to have a guest, who by the way was no personal friend of mine, let off in two successive beats two full-grown tigers in one day, though both stood within 20 yards for fully half a minute ; saying, in regard to one of them, that he thought it was a hyena !

The mistake that most would-be sportsmen frequently make in thick jungles is that they “look too high,” forgetting that from their perch in a tree they must not expect to see *height* in an animal like a tiger, but mostly length, very little breadth, and possibly no height at all, depending entirely on the angle at which the animal is, in respect to the shooter.

Generally speaking, their line of sight is fixed at far too great an elevation, which might possibly intercept the body of an elephant, but nothing less, so that the animal they are on the look-out for, passes beneath it unseen.

I was once out on an elephant with a tyro friend in grass jungles, when a fine stag-cheetle came in view about forty yards off. I pointed it out to him and said “there you are, forty yards, aim a bit low”; but for the life of him he could not see it, though the whole animal was clearly in view. After standing there for fully a minute the stag crouched into the grass and escaped without my friend having seen it at all. I told him to stay on the elephant and keep his eyes on the spot where he had been looking, while I went to the spot where the stag had been standing, so as to prove to him how far he had miscalculated his idea of a stag’s height in grass. On reaching the spot where the stag had been standing, I bent my body forward to about the same height as that of the stag, and then asked him how far above me he had been looking, and his reply was that he had been looking level with the top of a bush just behind me. On

going up to the bush, I found it some eight feet above my head, *i.e.*, over ten feet above the level of the stag. The fact was he was looking for an animal the size of an elephant !

Sitting at home in an arm-chair, this kind of thing seems hard to believe, but practical experience in heavy jungles will show that many young shooters look too high. Another mistake they generally make is that they fix their gaze too long in *one* direction, having, in their usual cocksure way, made up their minds that the tiger is going to appear at that particular spot and nowhere else, with the result that he comes out at another point and slinks off without being seen. Keep your eyes constantly roving (not your head, don't move that) over the *whole* foreground, then nothing will escape. This is a sound thing to remember in all shooting, stalking included. But I am forgetting my tale.

I should first mention that though I was nominally D.F.O. of Jubbalpur, I was also in charge of portions of the adjoining Districts, one of which was the Dhunwhai Range of the Mandla District. I one day received an urgent message from my chief asking me to do my best in the way of providing some tiger-shooting for an officer whom we shall call X.

As he was on his way to Mandla, I at once rushed out my buffs to Dhunwhai, where I knew there were then at least two tigers. I knew the jungles and had a few days' start, so by the time my guests arrived, everything was cut and dried for them ; the tigers had been fed free for several days, and the jungles kept strictly undisturbed.

I will not describe the beat, for there was nothing special about it. My men knew the work they had to do thoroughly. I placed X on my own shikar ladder, and having posted up all the stops myself and sent my men off to bring up the beat, I, with a sportsman of Mandla, took up our positions in the rear, whence we had a clear view of X, and waited to see him perform. And we did, but his was a dumb show.

I knew the tiger for which we were beating was a very large old male, and, from the various signs as the beat came up, I knew that the tiger was in the beat and that all was going well, so that it probably now all rested with X and his gun, or rather, which was

much more to the point, with his bullets. After a time we saw the grand old tiger slip round over the shoulder of the hill and down on to the level piece of ground in front of X where we lost sight of him.

After another few minutes, we saw X quickly throw his rifle to his shoulder and apparently fire, but no sound followed ; he repeated the performance and still no sound.

When the beat was finished, we went up to see what had happened, and found the old gentleman in a great state of excitement "a huge tiger, a monster, as big as a cow, stood within 20 yards looking back quietly over its shoulder in the direction of the beaters—yes—forgot to load the rifle. Oh! well, well, accidents will happen." I had had a second kill that night by another tiger in a different part of the jungle. So I cheered him up, and away we toddled to try our, or rather his, luck a second time that day.

This time, next to X so as to command him, I placed a friend of his, a big heavy man, who was so heavy that he started off by breaking his ladder and nearly had a nasty fall.

Having at last settled them safely, and posted out the stops myself, I got on to an elephant and went round to bring up the beaters myself, for I was not so sure of this part of the jungle. I first, however, went to have a look at the kill, to make sure what it was we were going to beat, and found it to be a tigress, whom I found at her kill. The first glimpse I got of her was when she was in the act of rushing the vultures off the kill, striking wildly at them right and left with her forepaws as they rose in the air, exactly in the same manner in which we all have seen cats do at sparrows. I have occasionally found freshly-killed vultures lying by the remains of animals killed by feline, so this is undoubtedly the manner in which they meet their death, for vultures are very heavy and clumsy birds in rising on to their wings, especially when gorged with meat. In fact, I have seen vultures so gorged that they could not fly at all, but could only waddle or turn over on their backs with their claws to their pursuer ; they then start getting sick, and when they have thus rid themselves of their superfluous ballast, they fly away. I have only seen them like this when they have been gorging themselves on a dead camel or other carrion not killed by a feline, for I fancy their instinct tells

them that they must keep themselves light when they are dealing with a feline's kill. But I am digressing.

The tigress I saw was a beautiful beast in her prime, and was about nine feet in length. On seeing me, she threw a growl over her shoulder at me and slunk off, giving me a splendid shot had I chosen to take it, but I intended her for those whom I had already posted up to await her, so I let her off, and was well pleased to see her go straight into the piece of jungle which I had already enclosed with my stops. I then returned to the beaters and started the beat.

From the repeated alarm calls of the jungle animals and the occasional hooting of the stops, I knew my lady was progressing favourably towards our goal. But I would not let the beaters hurry, for a tigress generally wants a deal of humouring, and any hustling will make her lose her temper, which usually results in her forcing the stops and breaking through.

However, nothing of the kind happened now ; but we had already covered three-quarters of the way and no shot had yet been fired, so that I began to get anxious. My anxiety changed to disgust as we came in sight of the gallant sportsmen, and to yet deeper disgust when I finally came up to them and realized that for the second time that day they had allowed a tiger to pass scot-free between them, within twenty yards of one and thirty yards of the other, for there at my feet, on the footpath which ran between their ladders, were the fresh footprints of a large tigress.

I looked up and asked what had happened this time, and one said, that where I was standing a hyena had passed, and the other said, that at the same spot a panther had passed, but as he was expecting a tiger he did not fire.

I asked them to come down and have a look at the footmarks of the animal, which one thought was a panther and the other a hyena. There was no disputing these tracks, so they had to admit that they had mistaken the animal, for there were no tracks of either a hyena or a panther, while those of the tigress were on top of our own footmarks made before the beat commenced. I found it difficult to excuse this second fiasco, and though I maintained silence, I am afraid my silence was somewhat profane. Our return journey was rather flat, but at dinner an attempt was made to cheer up.

Next morning as I was walking up and down in camp, thinking of the "Walrus and the Carpenter," X came up to me and said, "I have been thinking all night of that enormous tiger I let off yesterday, in fact I could not sleep for thinking of it, but I hope to hear before long that you have got him."

And he did, for the old male tiger, not having been fired at, had killed another of my buffs on the very night following the day on which he had been beaten. But X's party would not stay.

So I was left alone in my glory to do what I liked with my kill. But my family were waiting for me in camp in another part of the District and I wanted to start back next morning, so I could not wait for a beat.

On the other hand, this old tiger, who had long been known to the villagers as a harmless old fellow whom they called the "Bun Jamadar," from his habit of patrolling the roads at night, had of late taken suddenly to stopping people on the roads, which is generally a bad sign, for it is always a preliminary to a tiger taking to man-eating, so that villagers were becoming afraid to go and work in the forests, which would finally tell against my forest revenues if allowed to get bad. It was too late to beat for him that day, so rather than lose the chance, I determined to sit up for him, and got up into my *machan* over the kill at about 5 o'clock in the evening.

I had been seated there about an hour, when I heard a stick crack to my right front, an awkward shot, for there was a huge old male tiger looking up straight at me. I flung my gun (I always use a smooth-bore with spherical bullets for night work) up to my shoulder, but just as I was pressing the trigger, the tiger gave a bound forward, which saved his life for the time being, for my bullet hit him too far back. However, he was badly hit, for I heard him tumble over in the jungle, where he remained moaning, sobbing, and roaring from time to time.

I tried to get down my tree to negotiate, but the tree being an awkward one, I found I was unable to manage it with my gun in my hand, for I have only one hand with which I can grip at all, my left hand having been crippled.

I always carry a powerful whistle with me, which I brought out from Australia. I doubt if it has its equal in India, for it can be

heard for fully a mile. It has been my valuable companion for the last twenty years, especially valuable to my dogs. On one occasion in a beat I saw a tiger come bolting towards me like a hare, so I jerked out my whistle and gave a shrill blast on it ; the result was instantaneous and just what I wanted, for the tiger immediately drew up sharp about 30 yards in front of me, checking his impetus by thrusting his forelegs out in front of him, his body bunched and drawn back, head thrust low between his forearms and ears flat, just as if he had come suddenly on to a yawning pit. This momentary pause gave me the opportunity I desired, for I immediately planted a bullet into the hollow between his neck and shoulder, and he sank down with a gasp and turned over on to his side quivering, when a second bullet finished him. Had I not used my whistle, I would only have got a flying shot, with the probability of a lot of trouble and possible disaster in having to follow up a wounded animal on foot.

On this occasion I now used my whistle to call up my men, whom I had left about half a mile off, giving them on it my signal to approach my position from the north, for the tiger had gone to the south of it.

When they arrived, they helped me down from my tree and we all returned to camp. Here I at once gave orders for all the village buffaloes, which were accustomed to graze in the Government jungles to be collected at my camp early next morning to be ready for use in following up the wounded tiger.

These animals I knew would be well acquainted with the tiger, for the bulls of the herds would constantly have occasion to drive off the tiger. On the other hand, buffaloes that are grazed only in open plains, not being accustomed to be constantly on the look-out to drive off tigers, are not anything like as good for following up wounded feline.

Next morning I found ten or a dozen fine buffaloes collected at my camp, with a grand old bull as the leader of the herd. So we at once started for the scene of the previous night ; on arriving at which we found a lot of blood leading into a large patch of grass, where I had heard the tiger moaning on the night previous, so that it was quite on the cards that we might find him dead, but, on the other



hand, I knew from experience that when a tiger is hit as far back as I was certain this one was, they often still have a lot of vitality left in them next morning, so it behoved us all to be very careful. But I was also afraid that he might, in the meanwhile, have recovered sufficiently to enable him to escape on the further side when he was disturbed, so I went round and took up a position in a tree on the further side ; but before going, I warned the herdsmen to keep well on the heels of the herd, in which I knew they would be quite safe, for jungle buff have almost as good noses for feline as dogs.

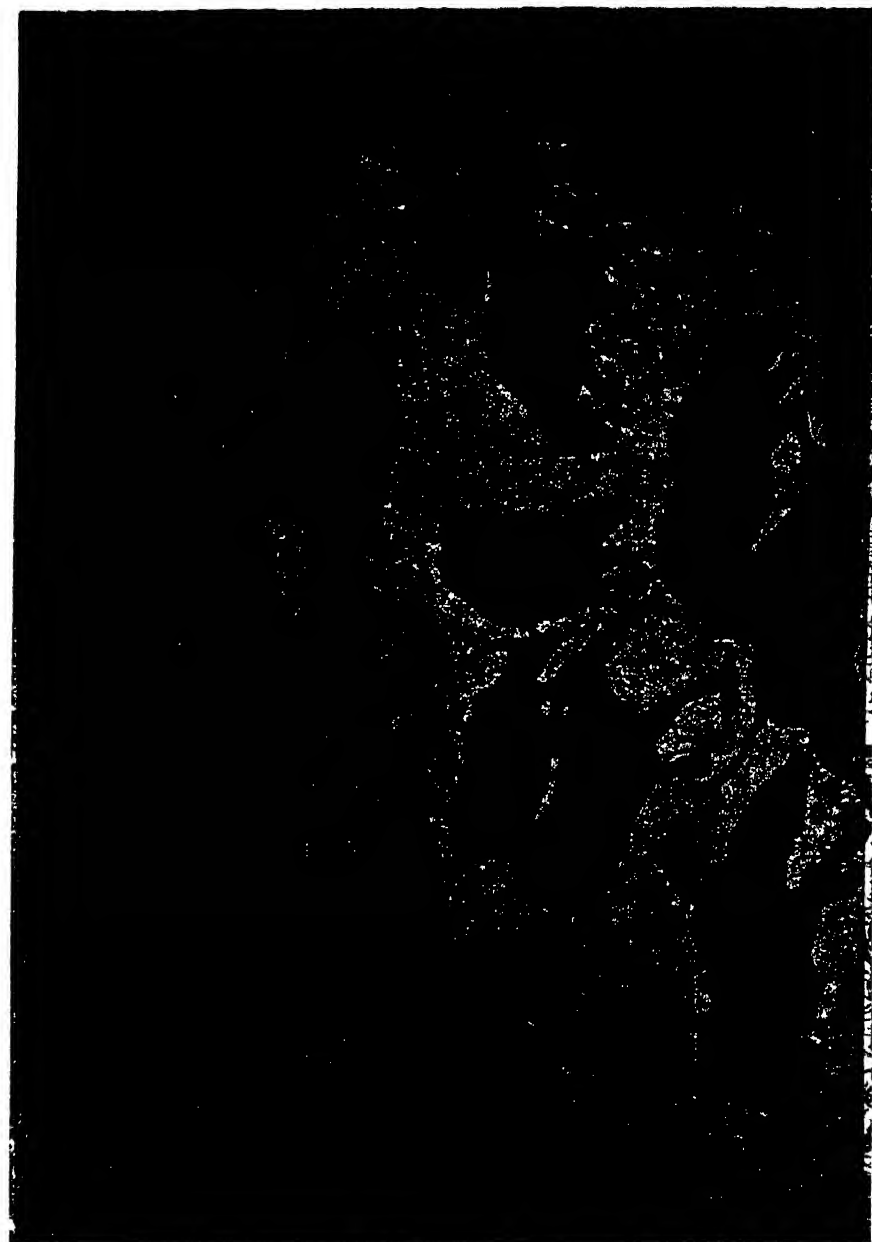
I had not been seated on my perch long, when the silence of the jungles was suddenly broken by a most awful pandemonium of sounds roaring, bellowing, rushing and waving of grass, the men climbing up trees like monkeys, shouting, pointing and gesticulating wildly.

At last the crowd of infuriated buffaloes, tails up and heads down, emerged in full view into an open glade, where the tiger came to a halt with his back up against a tree. The buffs immediately surrounded him and began closing in, when the tiger made a short bluffing counter-charge at the leader in front of him and the whole herd paused for a moment in their advance ; in an instant the tiger, like a flash, was on the back of the nearest buffalo, and from him on to the back of the next, and then on to the back of the next, and away and off out of the deadly ring that had lately encircled him, before the astonished buffaloes knew what had happened. It was one of the prettiest sights I have seen.

When the buffaloes recovered from their surprise, their heads went up with a jerk into the air, and they swung round in the direction in which the tiger had disappeared ; that their blood was now fairly up could be seen by their dilated nostrils, flashing eyes and the poise of their grand heads and necks, with every muscle of their body now quivering with energy and excitement ; very different beasts to the sleepy good-natured animals which they seem to be when quiescent.

Thus they paused for a moment waiting for their leader to act, then down went the nose of the old bull on the scent-trail of the tiger, and away he went with a roar with his tail up in the air, followed immediately by the whole herd like a pack of hounds on the trail





HE TORE THE BARK IN HIS RAGE





of a fox, but their music was roaring bellows which made the air shake in answer to the beating of their hoofs on the ground, flying stones, sticks, crashing of trees and saplings; everything went down before the avalanche charge of that avenging heavy brigade, and I felt sorry for that old tiger. But how many young buffs of this herd had he not cut off in their prime; so his day of reckoning had come at last, for, in his wounded state, I now knew the culprit had a very small chance of escaping from his relentless pursuers.

The party had gone off in the opposite direction, so I now slithered down from my tree as quickly as possible and legged it after them in the direction where I could hear the uproar going on. Here I came out on to the dry bed of a river, and saw at once that it was all up with the tiger, for the infuriated buffaloes had now hemmed him in a semi-circle up against a perpendicular cliff.

As I came in sight, the old bull made a determined rush at the tiger, who instantly reared himself up against the trunk of a tree and began to violently claw at the bark; whether he did this purely out of rage, or in order to dodge the rush of the bull, or whether his feline instinct prompted him to try and climb the tree and so escape from his relentless foes on the ground, I cannot say, for at the same moment I seized the opportunity of the clear shot he thus gave me and planted a bullet in his chest, upon which he at once collapsed, a limp and lifeless mass on to the ground, where the infuriated buffaloes at once fell upon him with one accord, tossing him high into the air from horn to horn, and finally the old bull gored his body right into the earth and then knelt on him with all the others around, each trying his best to also have a go in at him; and so the goring, kneading, trampling and tossing went on, accompanied by an awful pandemonium of bellowing, roaring and snorting, the whole enveloped in a cloud of dust, in which, amidst the slash of horns, was to be seen, now and again, tossed into the air, the forlorn spreadeagle form of a feline, which fell back again, limp and lifeless, into the black and heaving chaos below.

It would have been as much as my life was worth to go into that crowd to try and save the skin at that moment, so I was obliged to stand by and see it being ruined by these enraged beasts. At last the herdsmen turned up and, with difficulty, beat their buffaloes off the

carcase of the tiger, which they had by now reduced almost to a pulp, though I was glad to find they had not damaged the skin as much as I had expected.

Even when the buffs had at last been driven off, we had to be very careful, for the excited beasts kept circling round within a few yards of us with tails in the air, wanting to have another go in at the tiger.

This shows what buffaloes can and will do, when they are familiar with tigers and graze habitually in their haunts. Compared to them the plains buffaloes are awful fools, though even they can be very useful at a pinch in following up wounded feline, which they will attack if it attempts to put up a fight, but will not chase or follow it up, much less hunt it by scent like a dog, in the manner that a jungle buffalo will, for they do not know what the scent of a tiger means. I have known them to walk right over a hiding tiger without being aware of his presence, so they are not always to be trusted implicitly, though they usually serve the sportsman's purpose in disturbing and pushing the wounded tiger out of cover, and attacking him, if he puts up a fight, which after all is about all that is required.

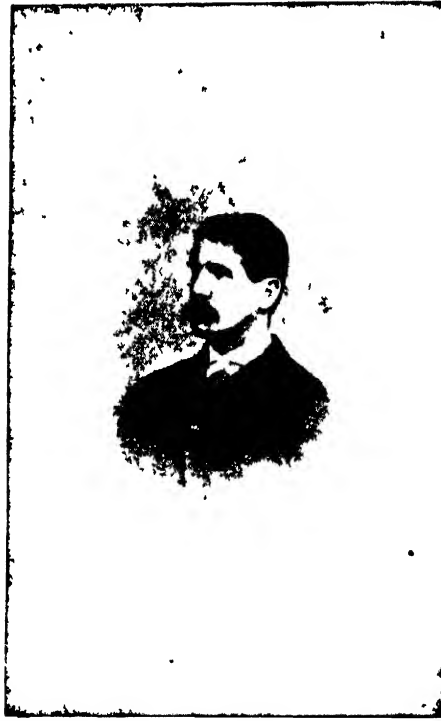
On the other hand, cattle other than buffaloes are often more dangerous to the sportsman that is following them than to the tiger in front, for the moment they smell a feline they stampede wildly back, tossing and trampling everybody that comes in their way, unless the sportsman succeeds in getting quickly behind a tree till they pass, and leave him in lonely glory in the neighbourhood of the wounded tiger. At any rate they have successfully pointed out the exact position of the tiger, and have saved the sportsman from walking unawares on top of him, so even they are useful in their way if the sportsman keeps their peculiarities in mind, and I have frequently used them for this purpose at a pinch, when I could not get buffs soon enough to suit me.

That evening I rejoined my family, taking with me the skin of the old tiger.

Thus did the buffaloes of Dhunwhai revenge themselves on "Bun Jamadar" for the numerous crimes committed by him among them; but his death was an honourable one, and he was saved in time from disgracing his old age with crimes of human murders.

A few days later I was standing by, having the skin of the tiger unpegged, when in walked the sportsman from Mandla. After admiring the skin, he told me that, after leaving me, X and his party had *seen* several tigers in the Mandla District also, but as something invariably happened, they lost them all, and that they had one of their beaters badly hurt by a boar, and another injured by a sambar which broke back over the beaters.





F. C. HICKS, 1863.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

“Over the valley, over the level,  
Through the Dakh jungle ride like the devil,  
There's a *nalla* in front, and a boar as well,  
Sit tight in your saddles and ride like Hell!”

*Shake-spear!*

No book on sport in India would be complete without an account of that grandest of all sports,—pigsticking. So, in this chapter, I am obliged to go again over much hackneyed ground and phases, for this form of sport is much too accessible to almost every Englishman in India not to have been threshed out in print many hundreds of times already.

My experiences in pigsticking have lain chiefly in the Central Provinces, where, when it is to be obtained at all, the country is very broken for the most part by hills and ravines. Here a handy and

hard-footed horse is required, rather than a fast horse, for which purpose country-breds, who are proved pigstickers, are the best.

If you can afford to pay a big price for a horse, always buy a made and proved pigsticker. But if you decide on training your own horse, then go slow at first. Never make a horse do anything which he dislikes, until you have first made him familiar with it ; and, above all, never allow an untrained horse to be cut by a pig, for it will ruin him.

First turn your horse loose into a yard in company with a number of tame pigs, and keep him there with them for a month. Then ride him after squeakers, jumping over and over them repeatedly, until he becomes quite accustomed to it, thus overcoming the dislike, which all horses have at first, of going over live animals. Then take him after an old sow, and prodding her with a blunt bambu, make her charge ; a sow can do no harm to a horse on the move, whereby he will gain confidence. If he does not mind this, he is probably a made pigsticker as far as staunchness is concerned ; for even if a boar does cut him after this training, the horse will probably not mind it.

Simultaneously with this, the horse must be taught to be "handy". For this purpose he must be made to trot and gallop daily in a figure of eight, in order to teach him to "change his legs". The figure being reduced in size gradually as much as possible.

In order to teach a horse to turn on his haunches, take him up to a walled corner, first at a walk, then at a canter, then at full gallop. This training must be done very gradually, covering several weeks, for the strain on the horse at first is very great. In travelling over rough ground, a horse travels almost entirely on his haunches, or rather his weight does, for which purpose he must be short in the back with a chopped-off appearance in his hindquarters, and above all he must have the very best of shoulders, by which I mean that he must have the best of slopes in his shoulders ; the higher the withers, the more must the slope be, and the rider in the saddle should be able to see a good length from the saddle to the spring of the neck, which will enable the horse to bring his forelegs well to the front with a nice clean sweep.

He should have a long neck and a high carriage to enable him to balance himself properly and see where he is going ; and if it is

necessary to use a martingale, a standing-martingale should be used and not a running-martingale, for the former will enable a rider to fall clear of a horse, while yet retaining a hold of the reins, instead of being hooked back by the reins under the horse, with the liability of the horse falling on the top of him, as in the case of running-martingales.

The pasterns of a horse on no account should be upright, for they jar a horse and soon knock him to pieces. A horse with a wild flashy eye is almost invariably timid, excitable and very liable to bolt, so as a rule such a horse will never be a good pigsticker. Mild, steady and full eyes, are the eyes that should be looked for in a staunch pigsticker.

Now, as regards breeds. In my opinion Walers, as a rule, are too long in the back, too clumsy and delicate, and stand the heat and climate, generally, badly for pigsticking in India.

Arabs rarely have good shoulders and are, therefore, almost invariably stumblers. Moreover, an Arab, especially if he be a stallion, soon gets "ideas of his own" in pigsticking, and soon becomes much too cunning, and desirous of playing his own game, quite irrespective of what the desire or game of his rider may be, which is extremely annoying at such times, to say the least of it.

For the pigsticking that I have been accustomed to I prefer nothing so much as a proved country-bred. Good country-breds are as active as cats over bad ground, and hard in hoof, wind and limb, with a short quick stride which enables them to "save" themselves far more than can a long striding horse. In fact they are far handier in every way, and stand the heat and the strain of a long day, with much worse food and care than Australians. Country-breds, however, are more apt to be excitable, for which reason the "flashy-eyed" specimens should be rejected if they are required for pigsticking.

Once a pigsticker (or the reverse) always a pigsticker (or the reverse), is the motto of country-breds; for, as a rule, they show from the very commencement whether they are going to turn out pigstickers or not. If, after a proper preliminary training, a country-bred shows that it still dislikes pigs, this dislike is almost certain to stick to him all his life, so that he will never be of any use for pigsticking, for he will always hang back or else bolt, both of which

traits in a horse at such times are very exasperating to a keen sportsman. So much for the horse.

As to spears, I prefer a length, the tip of which I can reach with my hand stretched up over my head, with a weight at the end to balance an extra reach. It should be the butt end of a young male bambu, the end near the roots, not from the thin or top end from which spear-shafts are only too often cut out of laziness ; it should be solid throughout, and the knots should never be more than a span apart, the closer these are, the stronger the shaft will be.

In regard to the blades, I consider the "bayonet" shaped spear-head too slender to be effective, owing to which many wounded pigs escape to die a lingering death. The "diamond" shaped heads are apt to stick between the ribs of the pig and so wrenched from the sportsman's hand. Of all, I like the "bay-leaf" spear-head the best. It should not be of too highly tempered steel, or it will be brittle and difficult to sharpen out in the jungles ; nor must it be too soft, for it will then be apt to become blunt by an accidental contact with some stem or bough of a tree, perhaps unknown to the sportsman, so that when he finally comes up with the boar, after perhaps a long and hard ride, he may find that he is unable to make his spear go into the pig.

If spurs are necessary as an extra inducement in a final spurt, they should be more or less blunt, with a very short neck, for otherwise the best of riders, under such circumstances, is bound to badly gall his horse.

In order to baffle the pursuing rider, pigs invariably select, as their course, the very worst possible bit of country in the neighbourhood, in the hope that while its foe behind is entangled in overcoming these natural difficulties, it will manage to slip out of sight for a moment and then make good its escape unseen up some unexpected *gully*, depression or other cover, while the hunter, having lost sight of it, is vainly searching for it in the wrong direction.

The pig, of course, knows every twist and turn of the country, and knows exactly which part of it will afford its pursuer the most obstacles and so facilitate its escape.

The fact that pigs invariably select this course is what gives the spice to the sport, and makes it so necessary to "follow" the pig's

every twist and turn, and on no account, if possible, to lose sight of the pig even for a moment. Hence the necessity of training your horse in this very necessary accomplishment, namely, to "follow" the pig, to follow every twist and turn of it. They soon learn it and after a time take a pride in it.

So, when taking a home-trained horse out after wild pigs for the first time, it is advisable to take it first after a wild sow, in order to train it to the actual thing over bad ground, without running the risk of getting it cut before it has become thoroughly familiar with the quarry and with what is required of it regarding them. Familiarity, it is said, breeds contempt, and this is very true of most horses, if they are trained steadily and carefully at the beginning in this manner.

On the other hand, a single fright will often breed a permanent fear, and if a newly-trained horse is carelessly allowed to be cut by a boar, he will probably be ruined for life as far as pigstick-ing is concerned. So always take particular care never to run the slightest risk of getting your horse cut, if he is being newly trained to the game. Once he has become familiar with and learnt a contempt for pig, he will probably not mind it, even when he is cut.

There is no animal for whose intellectual cunning I have a greater respect, than an experienced old boar. A neigh of a horse or the distant hum of the beaters, the old boar knows at once what it means and has quietly slipped out of the cover and gone miles, long before the beat commences or the Honorary Secretary of the Tent Club has told off the heats. In a beat he will send the sows and squeakers on ahead, while he himself will "squat" tight and will allow the beaters to pass right over him, though the stones thrown by them may actually rain on his old carcase ; and while the sports-men are discussing with the beaters the blankness of the beat at one end, he will quietly slip out at the further unguarded end and make good his escape. Or, on occasions when he is induced to leave the cover by the beaters, how often he may be seen to trot out into the open for some three hundred yards, then halt and stand immovably for some five minutes in an attitude as if he were listening over his shoulder, but in reality taking in a minute survey of the "lay of

the land" of the whole surrounding country ; then giving a grunt as he throws up his head as much as to say " this is not good enough," he deliberately turns round and trots back to the cover he has just left, jinking with contemptuous ease the sportsmen who now try to intercept him. Again, how often when hard-pressed, does he deliberately run into a herd of buffaloes or a sounder of tame pigs in the hopes of being lost in the crowd ; or through a village and even into a house ; or as a last extremity will deliberately commit suicide by jumping down a well or over a precipice. In the last two cases, I have only known them to do this when they had already been severely wounded and had otherwise no possibility of escape, so that it may have been that their purpose was one of revenge, in the hope of thus luring their pursuer also to destruction, for I almost believe a boar to be capable of it.

These, and many others, are the little ways of this artful old dodger, so that the Honorary Secretary has to get up very early in the morning and keep his eye very wide open all day to get even with him.

Pigsticking country is generally under cultivation during the whole year except during the hot weather season. So, generally speaking, the hot weather is the only season when pigsticking can be indulged in, in India. At this time of the year the whole country is as bare and hard as a brick, except for a limited number of isolated patches of cover consisting of grass, bramble, dakh-jungles or palm groves, to which, if water is also near by, but not otherwise, all the wild pigs of the country resort at this season in the absence of all other cover.

The great point to remember is, that in the hot weather, pigs cannot exist away from water, from which no amount of coercion will drive them away in a direction where there is no water ; these two points should be kept well in mind throughout, and all arrangements must be made with this in view.

On approaching such cover, great care must be taken not to make a noise, such as loud talking, the galloping of horses' hoofs, etc., for nothing seems to frighten an experienced old boar so much as the consciousness of the presence of horsemen, or so apt to cause him to sneak away unobserved before the arrangements are ready, or to

make him obstinate when the beat finally commences. In the Central Provinces, I considered one good boar worth a whole day's fag. I am not accustomed to getting eight and ten boars in one day as appears to be the case in Upper India. The characteristics of a rideable boar, as differentiating him from a large sow or an unrideable boar, are that he is much higher in the shoulders, lower behind, with a shorter head and a much more *lumbering* gait.

There is no mistaking such a boar, or should not be; so make no mistakes, because a single false start after an animal that eventually proves to be unrideable, is liable to ruin the prospects of the beat, for the old boar has noted the clatter of hoofs and, in consequence, will refuse to put in his appearance on to the same field.

When the rideable boar appears, do not move a muscle, but let him get well out; he will probably stop and take a prolonged stare within about three hundred yards, and if all proves to his satisfaction he will then move on again, but will stop again within the next hundred yards to have another stare. If he moves on after this, all is now probably well. His pace hitherto has been a trot, but now he settles down to a steady lumbering canter, showing that he has finally made up his mind to desert the cover for another.

He is taking it easy, so don't be in a hurry, or you will cause him to turn back to the cover when he finds he is being pursued, unless and until he has got so far that he considers it is not worth his while to turn back.

When the latter is the case, you may "ride," and if you are alone and not racing for "first-spear", try, as long as you are able, to prevent the boar knowing that you are pursuing him; by this means you will be able to save your horse and draw up much closer to the boar, with your horse still fresh.

But the moment you see by the quickening of the boar's pace that he has perceived your intentions regarding him, then ride for all your horse may be worth until you draw up to him, which will probably by no means be at once, for then the boar will also put on a tremendous spurt, which for a time may out-pace your horse; but it will only be for a short spell, when you will gradually







FINAL CHARGE

draw up to him. By thus not giving him time, you will probably save yourself being led by the boar on to the most infernal bit of ground in the whole country.

Now, never stick a boar that is immediately in front of your horse's nose, for if, in doing so, he jinks to your left, he will draw your spear-shaft right across your horse's forelegs, tripping them up and bringing your horse down, and perhaps landing you on top of a wounded and infuriated boar, when you might get a great deal more than you ever bargained for in pigsticking.

So, as you draw up to the pig, wait until you come to a level piece of ground and then edge off a bit to the left, and the pig, when he finds that you are no longer pressing immediately on to his tail, will at once slacken his pace a bit, with the result that you will immediately forge up level with him in the proper place on your right. Now is the time for your "spring", and you close with the boar, who will probably at the same time also make a spring at your horse with two rapid and startling grunts; but he will be too late, for your spear will have pierced him with the mere impetus of your horse as he flashes past the boar, who then passes harmlessly behind the horse's tail.

Your horse must now be brought round as rapidly as possible, in order to keep the boar in sight. You will now probably see him no longer at a gallop, but going along at a surly and vengeful trot; in fact he is waiting for and expecting you to come up, and, consequently, you will now have to be very careful not to be tripped up by the boar suddenly turning round and charging across your front.

There is no hurry now, so you may draw up as close as it is safe and then suddenly swoop past him; he will again spring up at you with his air-shaking *wouf! wouf!*, but you will have speared him again and passed on safe.

When you turn round this time, you will probably find him seated on his hunkers facing you, with anything but an amiable expression, as much as to say: "now come at me if you dare ye mane blaignard!"

His position now is decidedly an awkward one for you, for if you go at him now, he will get up and meet you and perhaps upset your horse.

It must be understood that I am here describing a *safe* method of a kill when out alone, in which great care is being taken not to run any risks of having the horse cut.

The only thing to do now is to draw off and await events, when the pig will either lie down and die, or get up and move off slowly, when it can be again overtaken and speared in the same manner as before. Personally, however, I have always relished face-to-face charges, and considered the game very tame without them.

I have found that horses soon learn to jump aside or to jump over the boar, and so escape being cut in such cases ; *mais chacun a son gout*.

In the above case I have assumed that the boar is of the type of the large heavy-fighting boar, which are occasionally found, that disdains to jink. But more often than not, I think, the sportsman's first, second and third efforts to spear will be foiled by the boar "jinking," when the rider will have to be very sharp in turning his horse round again, in order not to lose sight of the boar. In such cases it is generally only after repeated attempts to spear that the boar finally becomes sufficiently enraged to give the desired chance by meeting the sportsman's effort half-way, by charging.

If there are two or three riders, of course the matter is much more easy, for by jinking one horse, the boar often runs foul of the other, that is, if the latter has had the sense to ride a little behind the level of the leading horseman ; otherwise the pig, if all the horses are riding level in one straight line, by one jink to the rear, will dodge behind all the horses.

If you are out alone, and you find that your horse is unable to bring you to the pig (whatever may be the cause) so as to enable you to spear, it often serves, after you have thoroughly enraged the boar by worrying him, to draw off a bit to one side, when the boar will immediately slacken his pace. This will enable you to shoot across his front, and this act, in most cases, if the boar has been sufficiently enraged beforehand, will induce him to charge you and thus enable you to spear him.

Now a few words regarding " Tent Clubs ".

Pigsticking, like many other branches of sport, such as polo, etc., bids fair to become spoiled by the wealthy few. In my younger days we went in for sport for the fun of the thing, the best part of the fun in pigsticking being considered the final fight with the old boar, in which all could take part irrespective of the qualities of his mount, and no matter who obtained the "first-spear" so that everybody and anybody who could afford a fifty-rupee nag joined in the fun. But now such men are kept off the field, by those who can make a show in valuable horses, to compete for the greatest number of "first-spears" during the season. I have known owners of valuable and beautiful horses race ahead of the field, prick the pig sufficiently to claim "first-spear", and then, because they were afraid of their valuable horses being injured by the wounded pig, leave the infuriated boar to be killed by others.

Again, in keeping with the above, the expenses of most Tent Clubs are increasing by leaps and bounds. These expenses have to be shared by the rich and poor members of the Club alike, with the result that the poor man finds that he is unable to compete with his richer brethren and has to refrain from joining the Club. Even in the good old days we felt the advent of these "wealthy few" the racers for the "first-spear".

In the early eighties I was a member of the Nagpur Hunt. The conversation turned one day on to a boar killed by my old friend Lieut. Noble, which boar had had a reputation for having been "mad" and I casually mentioned that there was a similar boar in my District (Wurdah) which, for a long time, had been the terror of the local villagers, who had repeatedly sent me deputations to come and kill it, which I intended to try and do as soon as my duties would permit my going to the scene. Upon this, W., who lately bought a famous horse, a well known racer and hunter of the day, for which he had paid a long price of something over two thousand rupees, requested to be permitted to accompany me. So I arranged a date with him to meet me on the scene, bringing with him Janoo, the Hunt Shikari.

Against this famous horse, the only animal I had to compete was a little white pony named "Budmash" (meaning the "evil one"), which I picked up for the sum of fifty rupees when it was being

hawked about for sale in a disabled condition, owing to a pigsticking accident it had had with its former owner. With me, in time, it completely recovered, but, as its name denoted, it turned out to be a perfect devil, and a man-eater into the bargain, but when in sight of a pig, a perfect horse for the occasion. However, in time we got to understand each other, so though the odds were against me, I still had hopes.

The scene of our meet was on the Hinganghat River, where the old "mad" boar lived all alone in some rocks near a village, where he had made himself conspicuous by making unprovoked attacks on the villagers, of whom he had wounded several and killed one, besides having ripped several cattle in a similar unreasonable fury.

Near his stronghold was a nasty river full of water and several *nallas*, but for which the going was good.

Knowing his character, we provided the beaters with a number of fire-arms and plenty of other "music".

After an attempt to dispute the right of way with the beaters, the old boar, who was a veritable monster, finally broke on to the plain below, where W. and I were waiting for him, and having given him sufficient law, the word to "ride" was given, and away we went, the devil take the hindermost. It was evident that this was not his first burst before horses and bambus, for he made straight for the *nallas* in the vicinity of the village, where he showed his agility for some time, until pushed. He then made a bolt for the village gardens, giving us a lively series of jumps over the walls that surrounded them, with all the village dogs in full cry of the chase and all the village damsels watching the mad boar and the two equally mad Sahibs chivying him for all they and their horses were worth.

Up to this W had matters all his own way as far as I was concerned; but the cunning old boar had led us over such bad ground that he never once got within a hundred yards of spearing him. Finding matters too hot for him, he then headed for the river, which he crossed by the shallow ford. Here both W. and I got into trouble over some melon beds, which, as all pigstickers know, consist of a piece of ground covered with round pits some four feet in

depth, which are filled with loose, soft earth giving them the appearance of solid ground, but into which the unwary horse will flounder up to his shoulders.

By the time we had extricated ourselves out of this trap into which the cunning old boar had led us, the old gentleman was out of sight.

We were about to ride forward, when fortunately I happened to take a glance back just in time to catch sight of the cunning old rascal, who had doubled back on his tracks by means of a depression in the ground, and was now heading straight for his former haunts among the rocks.

By racing after him, we succeeded in heading him off; upon which he again headed for the river, but this time for the deep portion thereof.

Seeing this, W. rode "cunning" and at once went off for the ford. But personally I stuck to the pig, and by the time we reached the bank of the river I was almost on to him, when he jumped headlong into the deep water below and for the moment sank.

There was no time for me to do anything else, even if I had wished to, so in "Budmash" and I went on top of the spot where the boar had disappeared, and for the moment sank also.

When at length we came spluttering and gasping to the surface of the water, my lord the boar was swimming ahead of us a little over a spear's length away.

Finding that my weight was too heavy to allow my little horse to swim with me on his back, I slipped off the saddle and grasping his mane and my spear with one hand, I guided him with my other hand after the pig.

The pace had been very fast throughout, so that when the boar reached the land he could scarcely get up more than a trot.

On mounting "Budmash," I found he could scarcely do any better, so it was with despair that I heard the thunder of the hoofs of my rival swooping down from the direction of the ford on to the boar which "Budmash" and I had worked so hard for.

However, "Budmash" also heard the advance of his rival and apparently understood, for the gallant little animal immediately answered to the shake of his reins, and a moment later brought me

alongside of the boar, into whose flanks I drove my spear deep and left him seated on his hunkers behind me, in which position W.'s horse absolutely refused to go near him.

In the meanwhile, the boar took refuge in a large *karaunda* bush near by and refused to budge.

I was now able to give my nag a well-earned breather, for which purpose I jumped off and loosened his girths.

Having recovered our wind, we then tried to induce the boar to come out by galloping by his retreat, but except for short rushes of a few feet, he refused to do so.

Finally Janoo, the Hunt Shikari, turned up with a number of spare spears, so we resorted to dashing past the bush and shying spears at the boar as we passed, and in this manner eventually killed him.

I still have the tusks of this boar mounted in silver with the words "Nagpur Hunt, 1881," engraved on them; these two tusks together measure 18 inches. Thus on my fifty-rupee nag, by sticking to the pig, I obtained "first-spear," while W. on his two thousand rupees' horse, by riding "cunning" for fear of his valuable horse, failed to get it.

This is what happens when men ride valuable horses at pigsticking. I have seen it happen repeatedly, and it is bound to happen, for it is only human nature to risk least what we value most. But this is not "playing the game" when pigsticking.

The last time I saw an instance of this kind of thing was only a few years ago, while staying with my son H., who had invited some local sportsmen to join him out in camp for a pigstick. These gentlemen turned up on such valuable horses, that throughout the day they did not make a single genuine run, in consequence of which only one boar was killed, and on that H. obtained "first-spear" on another old white fifty-rupee nag, which boar, by-the-bye, got away wounded into a patch of grass, and H. and I tracked him up on foot and killed him between us.

A few days after this, a case occurred of a pig deliberately jumping down a well in order to escape from its pursuers. On this occasion, H.'s boss, the D. I. G., Police, a keen pigsticker, was out with him, and having wounded a large boar, they chased it straight towards a large well in the centre of a field, around which several



S T	AHMED ALI	A	DEHONAR	H	HICKS	C	DEHONAR.	OMMANY	
	SWAN.		SONE BROWN		GLIBBINS		OMMANY.	P	BRAWLEY





pairs of bullocks were being employed, by a number of men, in drawing water in large leathern bags. The boar, to the surprise of every one, took a header straight down this well, from which he was only retrieved by H. going down the well in one of the leathern bags, having to dive for the boar which had, in the meanwhile, sunk to the bottom of the well.

Poor Janoo lost his life in this manner, by his horse taking him into a well while riding a pig.

This points to the extremes to which pigs will finally go in order to baffle their pursuers, and shows the fallacy of the old pigsticking proverb: "where a pig can go, a horse can follow". The fallacy of this was once proved greatly to my cost. It happened in the Wurdah District that one day I was following a pig in this belief at full speed through some very thick cover, when the pig before me suddenly disappeared, and the next moment I was flying through the empty space of a forty-foot drop below me, which, till then, had been hidden by a screen of tall grass.

My horse was killed, and I knew nothing for a whole week, being unconscious.

Both my knees were gone, utterly, and the doctor said that there was no hope of their recovery under two years, and ordered me to at once go on long furlough out of India, with which I complied. So much for following pig blindly on the faith of what you may be told.

But whatever be the price paid, it is the finest and most exciting sport I know, when the gallant old boar is finally brought to bay, with five or six sportsmen swooping at him in turn from every direction, in a cloud of dust, sticks and stones flying, and churned up by the hoofs of the panting, foaming and snorting steeds which dart and circle through and around this tragic last stand of the old boar, who in the midst of all this hubbub is undauntedly charging with a *wouf!* *wouf!* here, and a *wouf!* *wouf!* there, at each and every sportsman as they flash by him; until at last, one getting exasperated pulls up his horse on to its haunches and allows the boar to deliberately charge on to and up his spear, with his roar-like grunts, gnashing its teeth and clashing its tusks against the bending shaft of the spear, which it is voluntarily forcing through its body in its frantic

endeavours to get at the person of its tormentor ; until another sportsman comes in to help, and the mighty beast at last falls with a heavy sigh, as his brave spirit takes flight to lands where, at any rate, his pursuers at present cannot follow.

Here's to you, old boar ! and may your progeny never decrease.

#### NOTES ON "BUNDOBUST".

The lessons of life are learnt by experience, and the greater the disappointment in our experiences, the better the lesson—or should be, if we have the sense to reason out the causes. So, for our present purpose, let us take an imaginary example :

It has been a blazing hot day in May, and ten spears with two hundred beaters have been laboriously hunting for pig from dawn to nightfall with very little success. None of the spears had made themselves previously acquainted with the ground, and the shikari, whom we sent on some days ahead for this purpose, has proved to be only a lazy, talkative fraud. We started from camp with our beaters and rode six miles to the hunting ground. Only once during the whole day did the beaters have an opportunity of having a drink of water, and that was at a liquid mud-hole in which pigs had been wallowing. In consequence of the intense heat and thirst, the beaters became demoralized and had to be driven the whole time with an excessive expenditure of hard language and temper ; they made no attempt to maintain their line, but advanced in groups, making no effort to beat the bushes or clumps of grass under which pig were lying tight within a few yards of them as they passed. At the end of each beat it was noticed that the number of the beaters had become smaller—members having slipped away in disgust—till towards the evening only some twenty-five of the two hundred beaters remained ; and little later even these few melted away to their respective homes. One pig had been run and killed during the whole day ; but who was going to carry the beast six miles to camp ? We stumble back those weary six miles in the dark, weighted with a feeling of great disgust that the whole proceedings have been a miserable fiasco from start to finish—a sentiment which is shared in a greater degree only by our personal attendants who are already dog-tired and have now to accompany us on foot on this

long journey back to camp. On our return, our dinner is a gloomy and hurried meal, with bed and sleep in view in which we may forget our disappointments, were it not that just as we are falling to sleep, it is announced that three of the late beaters have turned up to claim their pay—though they have probably been in hiding in the neighbourhood of the camp all day and have not been out with us at all. They are told roughly to come to-morrow ; but on the morrow no one turns up at all, for fear of being caught and taken out again by the mad Sahib-logs ; thus we have it on our conscience that none of the beaters have been paid—and never will be paid—for their first experience will prevent them coming to claim it.

The above may be an exaggerated example ; but the mistakes which it illustrates are frequently made in pig-sticking *bundobusts*, to remedy which the following suggestions are made :—

1. Whenever possible camp on the edge of the cover to be beaten, or as near to it as possible, never more than two miles from it. It is grossly unfair to your men to drag them a long distance to the cover in the morning with the knowledge that they have to return an equally long distance in the evening after a hard day's work. They can not, and will not, give efficient and cheerful work under such circumstances. The camp being opposite the centre, and near the edge of the cover, all portions of the latter will be within easy reach of the camp ; so that four hours' hunting in the cool of the morning, and two hours in the evening will give as much sport as the cover affords, without hardship to beaters, horses or riders. Sufficient and suitable water for followers and horses at the site of the camp is a *sine quâ non* ; so the site for the camp will be regulated by this condition. But as pig in the hot seasons are never found far from water, this condition is generally easily obtained ; water for the Europeans of the party being imported from a distance if necessary. Tree-shade at the scene of the camp is not a *sine quâ non*, as is too often supposed ; by sending men on a few days ahead, grass shelters, with khus-khus tatees and even punkhas, can always be erected in a few hours. If required, horses can always be kept under tree-shade a mile or two away pending the arrival of the masters at camp—after which in the day the horses will be hunting, and at night require no shade, so may be kept at night at the camp.

2. While out hunting, though water may be available for the beaters within half a mile or so, it is extremely disorganising and detrimental to sport to allow them to go to the water as often as they ought. Let a European trudge on foot with the beaters in hot weather over sun-baked ground ; he will soon be in a bath of perspiration, to make good which he will probably want—and want it badly—a *cool* drink every quarter of an hour. Yet sportsmen sometimes expect their beaters to work cheerfully, from dawn to dark without a drop to drink the whole day in such circumstances. The remedy suggested for this is always to take two large, or four small, grass-covered iron cisterns full of good water with the beaters. If large, each cistern should be placed securely on a cart, driven by a Kahar or Ahir, and should accompany one of the flanks of the beaters which will be just outside of the cover where the ground is generally open enough to permit a country cart being driven along it. If the cisterns are small, two of them could be placed one on either side of a pack-bullock, a mule or an elephant. The larger cisterns should each hold not less than fifty gallons ; and the smaller ones half that quantity. This will usually be sufficient for a hundred men for one day. If running short at any time, one of the carts or mules could be sent off to refill at the nearest water. The iron cisterns must be covered with a thick suit of grass, or the sun shining on the iron will make the water as hot as if it had been half boiled. To prevent the beaters breaking line to go to the water-carts, one Kahar to every ten men should be among the line, each Kahar carrying two iron “ghagras” full of water—they purposely break earthen ones—who will give five men on either side of them water as they require it. Every three Kahars should be in the special charge of an orderly, who when the six “ghagras” of all three men are empty will conduct them in person to refill at the water-carts ; the Kahars should not be allowed to go off to the water-carts independently, or they will disappear for hours on that excuse, trusting not to be missed by any one in authority, and the beaters will suffer in consequence and become discontented and surly.

3. Each sportsman should contribute at least one personal servant to accompany the line of beaters and maintain order. Thus, if there are ten spears out, there will be ten orderlies with the line,

each orderly controlling five or ten beaters, as the case may be, on either side of him. One hundred beaters twenty yards apart will give a line of over a mile, and when contented and properly supervised by orderlies will give far better results than five hundred surly beaters moving in groups of fifties with no interest in their work. The best plan is to fall in the beaters overnight, placing an orderly between every five or ten beaters as the case may be; then have all their names *written* down on paper, allotting the beaters by name to each orderly. This writing down of their names has a marvellous effect and influences every member individually throughout the proceedings. After this they will all fall-in at 4 A.M. in their proper places without any confusion, the shikari in charge marching them off in single file to the cover and lining them out ten paces apart before the sportsmen reach the scene.

4. Usually there is great difficulty in bringing the slain back to camp, because provision for this have not been previously made. If men to carry the dead pig are taken from among the beaters, and ten pig are killed, at once fifty out of the hundred beaters have gone. It is great satisfaction to most sportsmen on return to camp to gloat over their bag; but this is usually denied them, the pig having been left in the jungles for want of proper previous arrangements to have them carried to camp; or if they have been brought to camp the bodies are so decomposed by the heated gases inside, that no one can go near them, much less eat them, so that the beaters and syces are deprived of a much appreciated change of diet. For this purpose a special cart and four Chamars with their knives, etc., should accompany the water-carts; and as soon as a dead pig is brought to the cart, the Chamars should garrole it, which will keep it fresh.

Apart from the beaters, there should be four parties of men of a suitable caste to carry the dead pig; each party should consist of four men with a strong bambu pole and some string; one man of each party should be made jamadar or headman of the party with a promise of, say, four annas extra pay for every pig his party brings in to the cart. They should wear some distinctive mark, such as a red band as at Hockey—when they will be commonly known as the “patti-walla tolies”. Their orders are that when the beaters have been lined out, these four parties will occupy their respective posts,

one at each end of the line and the other two parties between, equidistant apart. They will mingle with and help their portion of the line till they are required elsewhere. When a heat starts off after a pig, the party nearest that heat will immediately start off in pursuit until they come up with the heat in time, when if the pig has been killed they will at once carry it to the cart for the purpose, on the flank of the line—where it will immediately be cleaned out by the four Chamars and laden on the cart. The party will then at once resume their place with the beaters till another heat starts off. This is on the presumption that the heats are also accompanying the line of beaters, as often happens. But when the heats are posted on ahead, one of these parties should accompany each heat. When heats accompany the line, the latter should be immediately halted every time a heat goes away after a pig, and remain halted till that heat returns. This may be tedious, but there will be no risks of good pig being put up and lost in the absence of a heat. Also, when so doing, look-outs should be previously posted ahead at the end of the cover to mark good pig going out to isolated bits further on.

5. Where possible, grass covers should be burnt down at the commencement of April; small bits here and there will always escape sufficient to afford cover for pig to lie up in, for pig require very little cover at such seasons in their regular haunts, and fifty pig will be quite happy in a bit of cover no bigger than a large-sized room. Neighbouring bits of "jhow" should also at the same time be cut down or thinned out; common sense will indicate the manner in which this should be done. The neighbourhood of dense "jhow," mixed with stiff grass, is fatal to successful pig-sticking, for the pig will all collect in it and absolutely refuse to budge in spite of any or all efforts to move them.

6. A spiecal orderly should be placed in charge of the cart to bring back the slain to camp, with strict orders not to allow any of the beaters or syces to loot the pig on the way, as they are fond of doing. Supposing the hunters return to camp by 11 A.M., they usually like a wash, some tiffin and a snooze. In the meanwhile the slain should be collected in the shelter of a specially erected shed, and a special watch set over them, or they are apt to disappear. When the hunters are refreshed they will sally forth, admire their respective







*Stella Hunt 1910*



*22 April 10 8 Boars*



*24 April 10 11 Boars*



*2 May 10 9 Boars*



*1st May 10 7 Boars*



*22 May 10 22 Boars*



*24 May 10 8 Boars*

*Total 70 Boars in 3 Weeks*

BAITIA HUNT, 1910  
70 BOARS IN THREE WEEKS.

trophies, and perhaps be photographed with them in memory of a good day ; after which the pigs may be fairly distributed among those who have worked for and earned the meat. This must be seen to personally, or injustice in the matter of distribution will be sure to occur—personal servants of the sportsmen who happened to secure most first-spears, claiming all the pigs secured by their master, and then auctioning the meat. I knew this to happen on one occasion some years ago.

The above suggestions are the outcome of actual experience in the field. To obtain willing and efficient work from your men, you must constantly place yourself mentally in the place of your men and be ever on the watch to immediately remedy the slightest cause for discontent. It was by the adoption of these methods that the Ballia Hunt a few days ago obtained no less than forty good pig in two week-end outings, when we hunted on an average only six hours a day, which was spoken of in the "Pioneer" of 4th May 1910. Three weeks later, on another ground, the Ballia Hunt beat even the above record by securing thirty boars in fifteen hours' actual hunting during  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days, or in hunting on an average of only six hours per day again. Such results three times in succession, a grand total of seventy boars in three meets, and on two different grounds over twenty miles apart, can not be due merely to chance ; and very strongly support the claims advanced for the practicability of the methods of pig-sticking detailed in this note.—H. W. H.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

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### FOREST WOOD-GOD ON THE PROWL.

In November 1894, I marched to the borders of my District (Jubbulpore) *via* Dhunwhai, from whence I went on a week's leave to visit my old friend W. K., then D. F. O. at Mandla.

On my way back I halted at Dhunwhai on the 19th November 1894. Here I heard that a large male tiger had lately come across from the east, from the Mandla jungles, and had taken up his quarters in the A Class forests of Barungda, where he killed a cow-bison under somewhat peculiar circumstances, the horns of which were brought in to me, and which I happen to have with me at the present day.

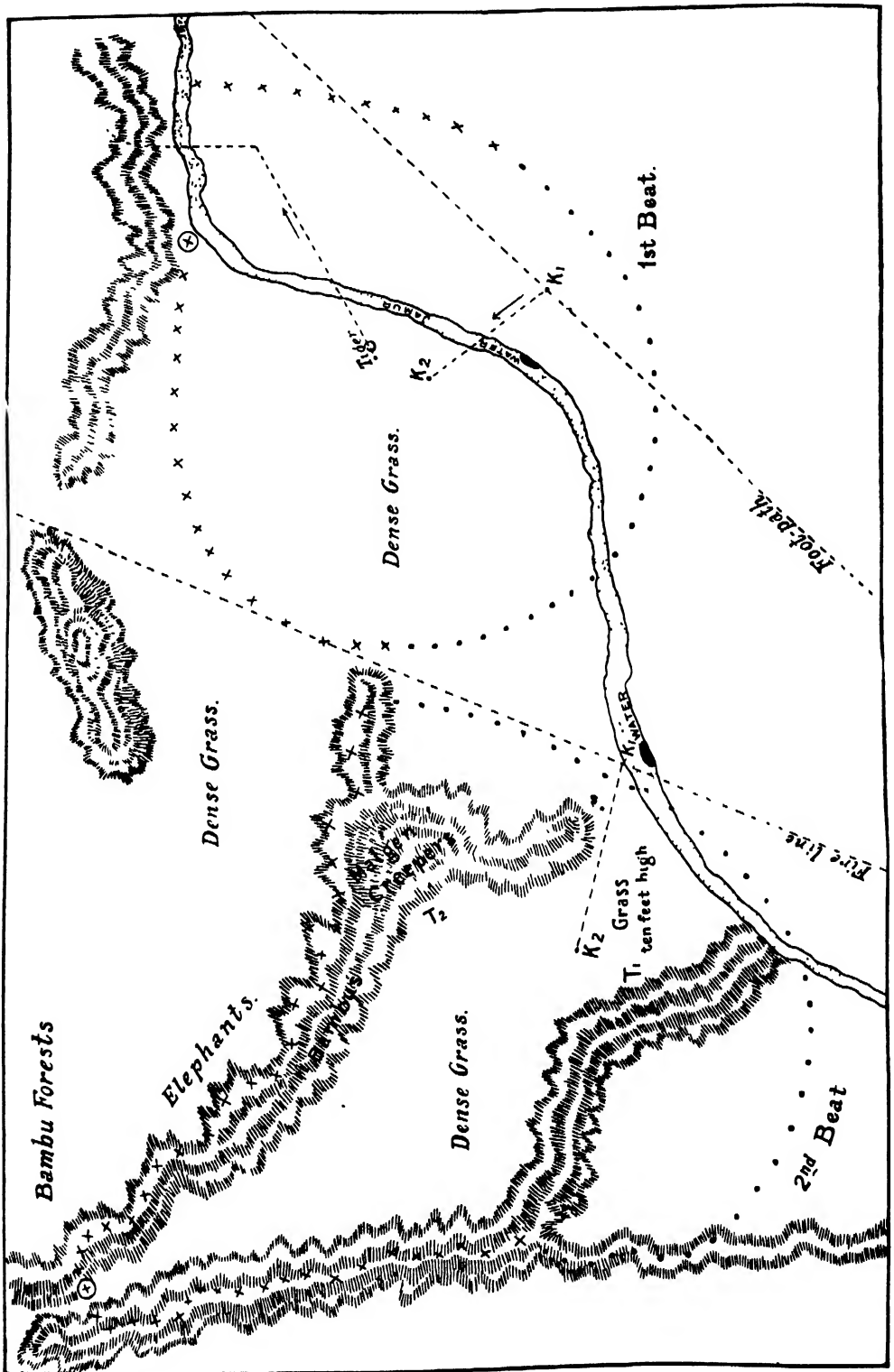
It seemed that there was a spring of water in the forest, to protect which the villagers had built a wall round it, which, in the course of time, had fallen inwards, forming a regular V. The cow-bison in question, in trying to get at the water, had got wedged in it, so that she could get neither backwards nor forwards, in which predicament the old tiger found and killed her.

I therefore had a buff tied out for him.

In the morning, however, when a kill was reported, I was down with fever, so that it was not till the afternoon that I was able to make a start, for, being anxious to move camp, I did not wish to put off the beat till next day.

It took us longer to reach the scene than I had anticipated ; in fact it was nearly sundown when we reached it, with the result that I had no time to see to all the arrangements myself.





BARUNGDA FOREST.

Referring to the attached sketch map, we came down the fire-line from the north till we came to the river-bed up which we then turned to the east ; then going along it till we came to the place where the tiger had dragged its kill across near which there was water where the tracks showed that the tiger had, after drinking, proceeded to the north of the river in the direction where he had taken his kill.

As we had not seen the tracks of the tiger crossing the fire-line to the west, where moreover there was no water, the presumption was that he was somewhere in the dense grass area to the east of the said fire-line, probably still near his kill, for it was a lonely spot where it was not likely that he had been disturbed.

I, therefore, determined to beat him to the east in the direction of Mandla, from whence he was said to have come ; so we hurried along the footpath on which the kill had occurred, for about three-quarters of a mile, and then struck across the river-bed till we came to the shoulder of a low spur of hills which approached the river at this point (X) This I considered a good spot for the gun, so I ordered my shikari, to line out the left wing stops and bring up the beat as soon as possible, while I in the meanwhile proceeded to put up the stops on the right wing.

Having done this, I placed my ladder in a splendid position where, if the stops on my left had been properly placed, I felt certain that the old tiger's stocking were as good as tied, for the alarm cries of wild animals within the beat area told me that he was in it and on the move.

The sun was about to set when the beat began, so we were only just in time. Everything was apparently going well, and I saw the tiger cross the bed of the river a long way down followed by the hootings on the part of the left wing stops, who turned him. I was expecting the tiger to appear before me every moment, and was listening intently, when suddenly I heard a stick crack *behind* me, and on looking round, was just in time to see the tiger vanish across the river behind my position.

I immediately slipped down my ladder and went in search of the culprit who had thus let him through, but to my astonishment found that for three hundred yards there was not a single stop.

My shikari's explanation was that he had understood that I was going to sit three hundred yards further up the river and had hence placed the stops from that point.

This is what comes from trying to do things in a hurry. Had I been able to see to all the arrangements myself, that tiger was as good as dead.

I was very disgusted at losing the tiger through such a stupid blunder, for I had to move on next day.

In the morning, however, I received a telegram saying that my boss, the F. W. G., had come to my district to inspect me and my charge. Hence I see recorded in my diary that I returned to Headquarters on the 21st, and on Friday, the 30th, was back again in the Dhunwhai range, this time with F. W. G. and my friend T., in order [to have another try for the old tiger that gave me the slip a week before.

On this occasion he killed a buff on the fire-line (K1) before referred to, and dragged it west and pitched it down in some terribly thick and tall grass, in a gorge between two ranges of hills which were thickly clothed with *malgan* creepers and bambus, so thick that men could scarcely see their way through it, so that it was anything but an easy place to beat.

We were camped at the time at Kalpi, which is about seven miles from the Barungda jungles, so that it was mid-day by the time we reached the scene of our operations, fortunately bringing four elephants with us, which were very useful in this dense cover.

Our watchers informed us that the tiger, up till about 10 A.M., had apparently been sunning himself on the slopes of the western range of the hills (T1), and then, probably finding the sun there too hot, had crossed the valley and had apparently gone into a densely covered *gully* (T2) in the north-eastern range, where he was probably taking his siesta under the dark shade of the *malgan* creepers, provided he had not crossed over to his old diggings further east. The latter point was decided by an inspection of the fire-line on that side, the dust on the roadway of which would have shown at once if he had crossed it, but he had not done so. There were heavy forests in every direction for miles, but there was no water to the north or west, so we were now practically certain as to where he was lying







The question now was, how were we to beat him? His natural run was to the east, from whence he hailed; but this entailed beating him either over his kill, which is unwise, or beating him over the intervening range of hills, which were so terribly wild and densely covered with matted creepers as to be almost out of the question. This being in November, the absence of the water for a few hours did not matter; so I determined to beat him straight up the valley to the north-west, though this entailed driving the tiger in the opposite direction to that in which I knew he would wish to go, for which reason the eastern range of hills would have to be very heavily stopped, for I knew he would do his best to break over them.

For this purpose, after having placed the stops along this ridge, I placed a second line of stops on the plateau behind them, consisting of the four elephants, with orders to the latter to keep moving up and down making a noise with their elephants while the beat was in progress.

When the stops had also been placed along the western range, where there was less danger, and the shikaries sent to bring up the beat, T. and I took up our positions behind F. W. G., who had been posted, of course, to get the shot in the narrowest portion of the valley, which he could command from side to side.

When the beat started, as I had expected, the tiger did his utmost, time after time, to force the eastern stops, but the smell, sight and sounds of the elephants in the background were too much for him, so he gave it up and sulked until the advance of the beaters again drove him forward.

This time he came straight up the valley like a gentleman, walking quietly along on the side of the ridge, hoping to get out that way. Being high up on a spur of the ridge myself, I had a good view of all that took place. The tiger walked quietly forward and stood within 20 yards of F. W. G., giving a chest shot, who shot it like a man, hitting the tiger in the white of his chest, so that it fell forward on to its knees and nose without a sound.

F. W. G. was delighted at the way in which the beat had been managed under such difficult conditions, and with the success of his shot; the latter especially gratified me, for there are few things so annoying as when a guest makes a mess after a lot of trouble has

been taken, perhaps under very difficult circumstances, to successfully bring a tiger out to give him a standing shot at a distance, perhaps, of only a few feet.

This tiger was a perfect specimen of a game-killer, measuring, as taken from my diary before me, 9 feet 4 inches.

Here ends the second lesson, after the failure of the first.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

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### TIGER-SHOOTING AMONG CAVES.

On the 27th April 1887, I marched to Konapindrai, in compliance with a promise I had previously made to the villagers of this place, in order to try and rid them of an old male tiger that had quartered himself in this neighbourhood, who was in the habit of doing a thing which usually only a tigress with cubs does, namely, to wastefully kill two or three cattle out of a herd in each attack, and was said to have killed in this manner, in one season only, no less than 200 cattle, whose value would be at the very least some Rs. 2,000, a large sum to poor natives in these wild parts.

This old cattle-lifter lived close by in some caves at a spot locally known as Dongardeen, in which it was also said he had been lately joined by two or three other tigers. These caves were formed by an enormous chaos of basalt rocks, tumbled one over the other anyhow, forming a ridge nearly a mile in extent; they are at a distance of about two miles from Konapindrai, and about the same distance from the village of Saakh, which is mentioned by Sterndale in his book "Seonee," page 127, on which page also he refers to "some wonderful bear caves" at a place called Ounrian near Saakh, which they failed to find owing to "their getting hopelessly lost in the jungles". I have little doubt that they were the Dongardeen caves that were referred to on that occasion, which are always resorted to by bears, and sometimes by tigers also, as on this occasion. These caves are situated within the bend of the river Pench, at a point where it suddenly bends south on the boundary line between Chindwara and Seonee, and strongly suggest to one's mind the idea of a strong upheaval of nature having occurred suddenly at this spot in bygone ages. In fact, similar upheavals were noticeable at intervals throughout the Pench Valley, in many places projecting seams of coal to a height of several feet above the ground. In 1886 and 1887, now more than twenty years ago, I repeatedly submitted official reports to Government to the effect that there were enormous quantities of very serviceable coal to be had in several parts of the

District of Chindwara, and suggested the advisability of an expert being sent down to go into the matter on the spot. But no notice was taken of the matter until only within the last few years.

I have read that the cave-tigers near Canton, and other places in China, are so mild-tempered and inoffensive, that sportsmen are able to follow them into their caves and shoot them by the means of torchlight, without there being much danger of being attacked by the cornered tigers. If a man were to attempt such liberties with an Indian tiger, he would not be alive long enough to try very often. At any rate, personally, I had no intention of wandering about inside those labyrinthian caves with torches.

The question then was as to how we were to get at these tigers? Fortunately these caves were not solid, for, as mentioned before, they were formed by a chaos of rocks, chiefly in enormous slabs, tumbled about over each other, so that the upper portions of the caves so formed were full of crevices through which stones and fire-works could be thrown down. I had brought with me a large supply of fire-works for this very purpose. I, therefore, determined to bully the tigers in these caves for several days in succession, in the hopes that they would at last bolt out and perhaps give a flying shot; or else clear out altogether at night into the adjoining forests, where I could easily work them.

I first tried to induce them to lay up in the adjoining forests by tying up buffs for them to kill and eat, at places where there was good cover and water.

A kill was duly reported and on proceeding to the scene, we found that there were altogether three tigers, one of whom, by his enormous footmarks, appeared to be a regular old patriarch, and who, the villagers assured me, was the one who had done all the damage to their cattle, the two smaller tigers being late arrivals.

On taking up the trail of the tigers, we found they had gone straight off and had entered the Dongardeen caves. So there was nothing for it now but to lay ourselves out to systematically bully them out of them.

I placed groups of men at various points over the whole area of rocks, always seeing that they were placed on the top of some perpendicular rock where they would be out of the reach of a tiger, should

one come out by them. All the noisy and musical instruments, such as drums, horns, etc., of all the villages round about had been commandeered, supplemented by kerosene tins filled with stones. Besides which, each party of men were given a supply of fire-works to be hurled down into the crevices below them.

On a pre-arranged signal being given, the pandemonium commenced simultaneously in all directions, and it was not long before the tigers beneath began to move and make their presence evident. Wherever the tigers went they were met with volleys of stones, fire-works and abuse, until finally the animals began to lose their tempers and tried to put their enemies to flight by charging in their direction with loud roars.

In the meanwhile, I was jumping about from rock to rock like a monkey on hot bricks trying to get a sight of them, but in vain, for, as usually happens on such occasions, the beasts appeared before every one, except the person who was most anxious to see them.

After each such display of temper, the tigers used to subside and sulk for an hour or more in some obscure corner, until again dislodged by some more lucky shot with a rocket or a bomb. So the game went on until nightfall without my being able to get a shot at them, not a shot that I cared to risk, for to merely wound a tiger here was inevitably to lose him.

Next morning, we again returned to these rocks, with a fresh supply of fire-works ; and soon discovered that now only the large old gentleman was at home, the other two tigers having deserted during the night.

However, he was the most mischievous beast of the lot, so I determined to stick on to him until I could kill him. The same tactics as before were now again employed, and there being now only one tiger to be dealt with instead of three, my men became much more venturesome, and crawled about over the rocks, following all the movements of the tiger below them, throwing down fire-works at him and keeping him continually on the move, without a moment's rest, so that I now knew the tiger would be obliged finally to make a bolt of it from the rocks.

The men were all in high spirits and confident of success, for I had on the previous night given them the wherewithal with which

to propitiate their jungle deities. It was amusing to watch these Gonds as they jumped from rock to rock, laughing and chattering like children, peering and throwing down fire-works at the tiger below them, saying: "here is another one for you! come on out and be done with it, for we have done *puja* to the *Barra-deo* and he has given you to us."

In this manner, accompanied with much personal abuse regarding himself and his ancestors, the tiger was finally driven into a corner from whence there was no escape for him without passing by me, for here I was able to cut off his only retreat—he had entered a fissure on the rocks from whence there was no other outlet but the one at which he had entered—while in front of this opening grew a small tree, up which I promptly climbed and obtained a somewhat precarious footing on a branch.

The opening into which the tiger had gone, was also open along the top, some twenty feet above, so the remainder of our task was simple. As soon as I was seated on a perch commanding the entrance, my men climbed up on top of the rock and threw down fire-works through the crack, into the cavity below.

Almost immediately the tiger dashed out with a roar, and made a jump in the direction of some shelving rocks to my left front, on the top of which some more men had incautiously put in an appearance. Whether it was the tiger's intention to rush at the men, or whether it was merely a blind rush on his part, I cannot say. However, just as he landed on the rocks, my bullet broke his back and brought him sliding down in a heap to the base again, where I finished him with my second barrel.

Immediately, the Gonds swarmed down from all directions, tumbling over each other in their joy and excitement over the death of this beast, who had for so long levied such a heavy toll on their cattle, and who had frustrated, by means of these caves, all the efforts of every sportsmen who had tried after him. He was an enormously heavy beast, and very light-coloured, a typical old cattle-lifter.

This tiger I killed on the 20th of April 1887, and, on the same evening, I had buffs again tied out for the remaining tigers, which I knew would be knocking about somewhere in the neighbourhood.







On the morning of the 30th, a kill by our two friends was reported in another portion of the jungles. But we had bad luck throughout the day. In the first beat a careless stop let the tigers escape through the line, and in the second beat I used my .450 Express rifle with explosive bullets, which had done such good service on the day previous. The result was that when one of the tigers appeared before me in the second beat, my bullet exploded on an intervening branch and failed to reach the tiger at all, which escaped ; while the shot frightened the second tiger back over the line of beaters, and he also escaped.

I was very disgusted at this bad luck, and could not understand how it was that the base of the bullet, at any rate, had not struck the tiger who was standing immediately behind the branch. On examining the branch carefully, I found that though the bullet had nearly cut the branch in two, it had struck it on the upper portion, and had so, apparently, got deflected over the back of the tiger. Had I been using a solid spherical bullet, it would have smashed through the branch and killed the tiger beyond.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

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### CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S SHOOT.

*31st December 1892.*

On my arrival in the Jubbulpore District, I found it to be the prevailing idea that there were no tigers to be had in the district except at Chitry and Majhgaon, in consequence of which everybody were fighting like Kilkenny cats over these two places. I ventured to express a doubt on this point one evening at the club, and was promptly rounded on by certain of the local sportsmen who "knew," for "had they not been in this district for so and so many years" and "what did I know, being a new-comer, etc., etc."

However, when I went out into camp and had a quiet look round, I found that there were tigers in almost every part of the district, as many and more outside the Government forests as in them.

But when I commenced to steadily shoot two or three tigers every month in the ordinary course of my work, people began to talk; but the scoffers still held to their fixed opinions, and maintained that I was shooting each and every of the "few" tigers that the district contained and waxed exceeding wrathful against me, in spite of the fact that I left Chitry severely alone.

To indicate the real state of affairs in this, as well as most other districts in the Central Provinces, I will refer to certain of my entries in my diary in the latter part of the year 1892.

About the middle of November I was requested to keep my eyes open and mark down a few tigers for His Honour the Chief Commissioner who proposed to do some tiger-shooting in my district towards the end of the Christmas holidays.

In consequence of this intimation, the observations noted in my diary at that time regarding tigers are as follows:—

*November 25th, Friday—*

Commenced the coppicing works in Block No. 41; 344 acres to be cut in this circle. There are three tigers here in Block No. 39.





INDIAN CROCODILE REVERSED

*December 3rd, Saturday—*

Inspected Block No. 38 ; this is useless for coppicing, half of it consists of glades and of the old *abadi* (deserted village site) in which Palas and Ber chiefly grow. There are two tigers here on the Huran River.

*December 6th, Tuesday—*

Received D. O. letter from Thompson (my Conservator) regarding arrangements for the C. C.'s shikar trip. Replied to it.

*December 7th, Wednesday—*

Inspected Block No. 33. I intend arranging a forest village here. Two tigers here.

*December 11th, Sunday—*

Block No. 30. Two tigers here.

*December 13th, Tuesday—*

Inspected Block No. 25 and fixed a spot for coppicing ; this is Sal where I am going to cut. Shot six teal. There are three, if not four, tigers here.

*December 18th, Sunday—*

Block No. 15 ; two tigers here. One "gara" (kill) here. Marks of a bear at the water.

*December 19th, Monday—*

Marking out coppice strips in Block No. 16 (44 acres). Very bad jungles,  $\frac{1}{4}$  *maidans* ; to report this to Conservator. No kill to-day ; over 50 "garas" (buffs) out. Report of four tigers lately seen seated on a pile-stack (stack of wood). Marched to Block No. 17 ; lines are well cut ; tracks of tigers here.

*December 20th, Tuesday—*

Marched to K. Found a buff killed, a large tiger ; there are two tigers here. Lines all well cut and *manaras* (boundary pillars) white-washed. I have to take 20 grains of quinine to keep fever off. *Pucca* (reliable) arrangements made for the shikar. Three kills up to date.

*December 25th, Christmas Day—*

King with us. Shot snipe and teal. We are all quite well again.

*December 26th, Monday—*

Shot a *mugger* (crocodile) in tank that caught the Forest-guard. Telegram from T. regarding the C. C.'s shoot. Up to date 13 buffs killed.

*December 28th, Wednesday—*

T's camels and two elephants arrived ; sent them on to Chandia Sent T. a telegram. Golam Nabbi, Ranger, gone to B. There are seven or eight tigers about here.

*December 29th—*

Received letters and a telegram from T. saying that the C. C. and his friends would be out on the 31st to shoot.

*December 30th—*

Making arrangements for coolies.

*December 31st—*

Went to Chandia railway station and met the Chief Commissioner, Sir Antony MacDonnell, and his friends B., L. (an M.P.) and Dr. M., the Inspector-General of Prisons, with whom is also Mr. Thompson, the Conservator of Forests.

I accompanied the party back to my camp, where my wife had breakfast ready for them in our dining tent.

The M.P., knew my people at home, so we were soon on terms, and after breakfast went out snipe-shooting together, while the rest of the party with my two little daughters, headed by the Chief Commissioner, amused themselves with a quackenbush rifle shooting and zealously shikaring crows, etc., round camp.

That night, after dinner, we were all standing round a large bonfire of logs, which I had had made specially to fit the occasion, when a *sawar* brought in the post, and soon every one was busily engaged in reading letters.

The silence, however, was broken by B. commencing to read out, in a quiet, even tone a portion of his letter—" my letter states," he said, " it is a pity you did not stay for the dinner here, for Mr. X. says that you and the C. C. have gone out only after 'phantom' tigers."

An awkward silence followed this announcement, which was broken only by the withdrawal of my guests to their respective tents. As soon as I was able, I went straight to my Chief's tent, and his first words were: " Did you hear that ? " I said I had, and that the proof of the pudding would be the eating.

Nevertheless, I now felt considerably anxious, for though not much a believer in " good luck," I yet believe in " bad luck " on

occasions, in spite of the best and most elaborate arrangements, while what made it worse for me was that my guests, on this occasion, could only spare me two days in which to vindicate myself. Supposing that during those two days I had persistent bad luck, as sometimes happens. From the foregoing notes in my diary it will be seen that I had seven tigers marked down within a radius of about five miles; while within a radius of fifteen miles I had marked down over twenty tigers. But with only two days at my disposal it was hardly fair, *supposing* we had bad luck those two days. There was the possibility, but I considered it extremely improbable, for I had been feeding these tigers regularly, and they had now eaten over twenty of my buffs within fifteen days without being disturbed.

Next morning, 1st January 1893, as I anticipated, news came in of a kill at No. 20 Block, so after *chota-hazri* we all six started for the scene on the elephants.

On nearing the forest we halted, while I proceeded with Mr. L., who specially requested me to permit him to see my methods, to inspect the kill and put up the stops.

This being done, we returned and found the C. C. with my map on his lap, examining it carefully, regarding which he asked me to explain the meaning of the sundry red and blue marks on it. This I did, pointing out that the red marked where the tigers were and the blue the posts for the guns. We then proceeded to business.

The best place was, of course, reserved for the Chief Commissioner, but Sir Antony would not hear of it, and insisted on drawing lots for the place with the next senior man, B. As luck would have it, the best place was drawn by Sir Antony, a just reward for the unselfish and genuinely sporting spirit he had just displayed, at which we were all the more pleased.

Having seen them all up their trees, I went round to bring the beaters up myself in person.

I placed my two Forest Rangers, one in charge of each wing, while I myself on the elephant took charge of the centre, moving backwards and forwards up and down the line, sometimes pushing up one wing more or less and sometimes the other, or checking individuals who were too far forward, pushing up those who lagged.



While so engaged I caught sight of a huge male tiger in a *nafla* bed moving heavily off in the direction in which I wished him to go, for he was evidently heavily gorged with beef, so would probably give very little trouble. Immediately after this again, I saw another, a tigress, also moving off in the same direction, and she too, by her sluggish movements, was heavily glutted; so I chuckled somewhat at the very *substantial* appearance presented by my "phantom" tigers, for the phrase had been running in my head ever since the previous evening, and I wondered what my friends forrard would think of them in a few minutes.

Soon afterwards there were two shots in front of us, but no answering roar, so I was afraid that one tiger at least had been missed.

A few minutes later there was another shot, followed by a lot of roaring but no more shots, so that it was either dead or had gone on wounded.

Pushing forward on the elephant to see how matters stood, I first came up with B., who informed me that both he and the Doctor had fired at a tiger, but it had gone off apparently unhit.

Sir Antony I found had wounded the male tiger badly, but it had picked itself up and vanished.

The party now all got down from their respective trees and set to work on their breakfast in the jungles, during which I managed to slip away and took up the blood-trail of the wounded tiger.

There was any amount of blood, but when I failed to find the tiger dead or alive within the first half mile, I knew further pursuit that day was useless, for the tiger was well on the move and would now keep moving till sundown. So I returned and reported the results. It was then agreed that we should spend the whole of the next day in trying to retrieve the C. C.'s wounded tiger. The rectitude of the moral principle of this decision was unanswerable, so though I was greatly disappointed, I acquiesced.

We accordingly hunted the whole of the next day for the tiger, but though we found plenty of blood, we never came up with him.

This was the 2nd January, the last day of the official holidays, and the C. C.'s official sense in regard to his duties was such that in spite of the great temptation before him, he ruthlessly denied himself then and returned to the routine of his official duties on the





following day, though the remainder of the party consented to stay on for a day longer.

In saying good-bye, Sir Antony said : " I hope to hear soon that you have killed the other tigers," and he did.

On the morning of his departure a kill by a tigress was reported in the Gara Nalla.

The others had had their chance, so on this occasion I placed Mr. L. in the best position, and he killed the tigress like a man. On the following morning the whole party left me for Jubbulpore, leaving me with the field to myself.

My diary for the year 1893 has been lost. But on the last page of the 1892 diary there is a note as follows :—

*5th January 1893—*

C. C.'s party left for Jub. Tried to pick up the C. C.'s tiger, but heavy rain has washed out the tracks ; a party of men saw it very sick going towards Salia.

*6th January—*

Got a kill and shot a tiger, measures 9 feet 7½ inches.

*7th January--*

Heavy rain. Halted.

*8th January—*

Got a kill and shot a tiger, length 9 feet 1 inch.

Thereafter, I presume I continued my notes in my 1893 diary, which has been lost. However, within a month I shot four more tigers in this neighbourhood, making a total of six tigers to my gun, while the seventh tiger, as before stated, fell to Mr. L. Only then did I desist and consider that I had vindicated the concrete quality of my " phantom " tigers.

Shortly after this, I again met Sir Antony MacDonnell, who at once asked me how many of those tigers I had killed, and on my telling him that I had shot six since I last saw him, he showed that he had not forgotten a certain little incident, by turning round and saying : " Very substantial ' phantom ' tigers, very substantial indeed !"

Here, I should like to pay a tribute to my old friend and Chief the late Mr. R. H. E. Thompson, who served Government for nearly forty years in India, retiring finally in the year 1897 as Conservator of Forests.

His knowledge of botany, entomology, ornithology and zoology was that of an expert, for the scientific study of these was the hobby of a long life, every spare moment of which he was in the habit of devoting to these all-absorbing subjects.

There are few scientific books in these branches written in modern times by Anglo-Indian writers, that do not owe a good deal to Mr. Thompson's co-operation and research, as may be seen by the frequent mention of his name in Hume and Marshall's and others, though I do not think that sufficient credit was always given him by some.

In scientific knowledge of his subjects, which also included that of big game sport in its practical sense, he was without an equal in India. Yet his natural modesty was such—much to the public loss—that none of his friends ever succeeded in getting him to write a book.

A superb shot, and with a marvellous instinct in regard to the habits of every living creature, his judgment in sport was beyond question ; and many a good tip I learnt from him in my younger days.

He was a most genial companion at all times, and most interesting and instructive ; he must have been a dull man indeed who thought otherwise, when in the forests in company with a man of such accomplishments. It is a thousand pities that a man of his intellectual attainments, and whose lot had been cast in such, for him, appropriate surroundings, should have left no permanent records behind him—for alas ! my dear old friend has now joined the great majority.





## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

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### KHATOLI.

*4th March 1892.*

While touring in the north-eastern portion of the Jubbulpore District in the early part of the year 1892, I received a letter from my old friend M., the D. S., Police, complaining bitterly of a run of bad luck he was having in shooting.

I was then moving up in the direction of some tigers, so I sent him a note asking him to join me and see if we could not break the spell. I see noted in my diary that I sent M. the note from my camp at Bhursa on the 28th February, and that he joined us the next day at our next camp at Vilait, but left us again in order to bring up his own camp and rejoin us at Khatoli, on the 2nd of March.

This we did, and spent the 2nd and 3rd in examining the forest and tying out buffs in the best places, so as to make quite certain of all the circumstances and the lay of the land.

A certain stranger had been lately harassing these jungles, his only achievement being to have driven the two large tigers that really belonged to these jungles clean out of the place, his great idea in tiger-beating being to have plenty of fire-works, plenty of guns and plenty of tom-toms—his highly paid shikari, often as not, placing him in one direction while the beat went off in another, simply because the shikari was above fetching up the beaters himself and telling them in which direction his master had been placed.

I have heard him complain that he had often to send off sowars (horsemen) to fetch back the beaters, because they had gone off in the wrong direction.

He had, however, similarly disturbed the neighbouring "A Class" forests of Machmacha, and had driven a large tigress thence into the Khatoli jungles, where we were now, which was a doubtful favour, for, in consequence of her late experience, she was very much on the jump and very shy.



However, on the morning of the 4th it was reported that the tigress had killed a buff on the footpath, in the bend of the nalla, and had dragged it off across the nalla into the heavy bambu jungle to the west.

Having made our arrangements overnight, we made an early start with our beaters.

The report regarding the kill was such that, knowing the jungles as we did, we thought it safest to leave all our beaters on the main fire-line (at B) about a mile to the west of the kill (at K<sub>1</sub>).

We then proceeded quietly with our shikaris to examine the kill, carefully keeping our eyes on the footpath as we went, for any track which might show that the tigress had gone out to the south. We found no such tracks, however, and on arriving at the spot where the buff had been killed, we found that the tigress had taken her kill—as reported—across the nalla to the west.

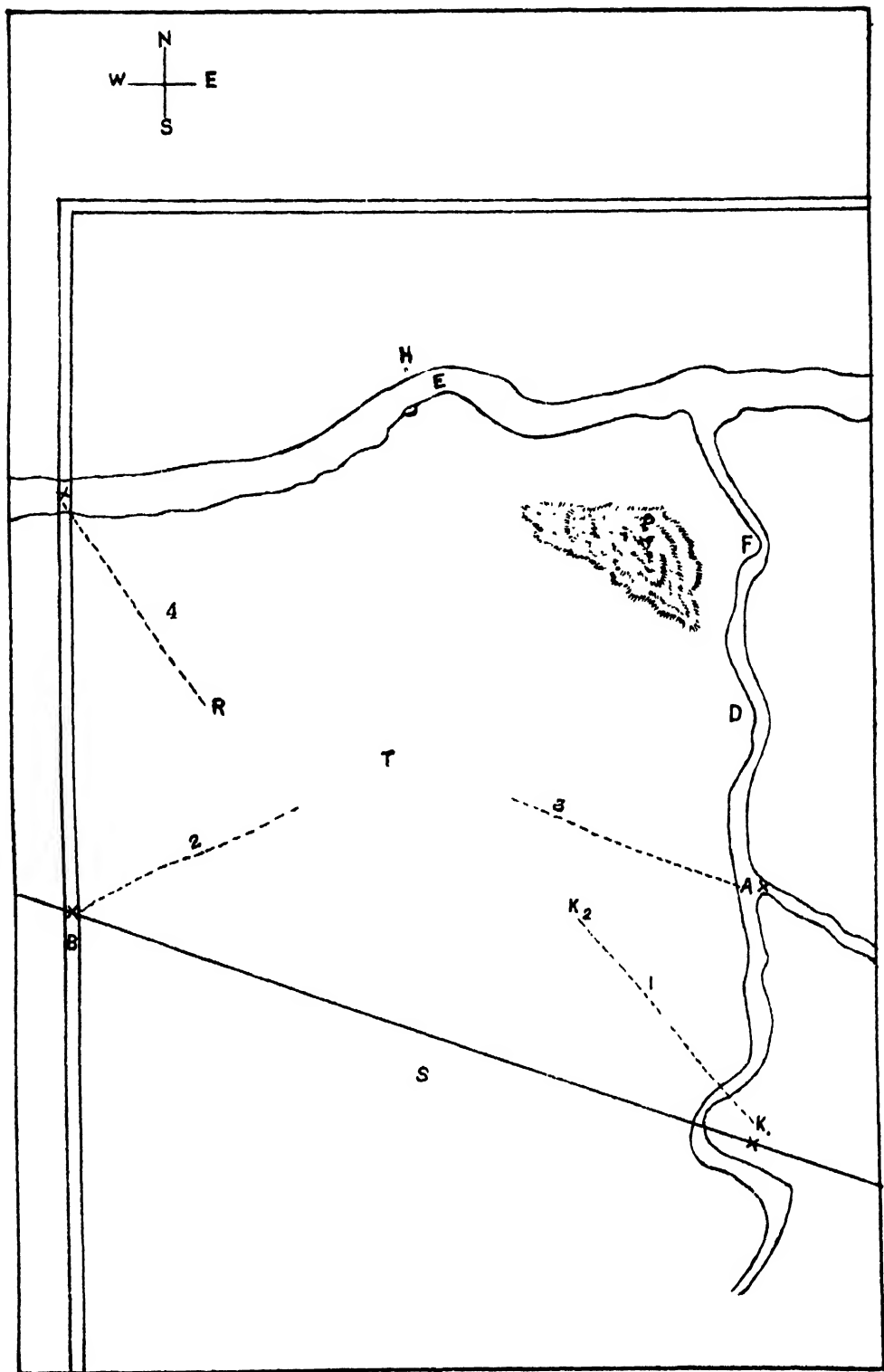
We followed the drag carefully and, after about two hundred yards, found the place where she had cleaned out the stomach of the buff. From this place she entered a dense jungle of bambus and rocks, where eventually we found the remains (at K<sub>2</sub>).

It was a typically secluded spot for a tiger to lie up in, so we calculated that she was then lying about the centre (T) of the triangle formed by the footpath and the two rivers.

We had already examined the footpath, so we quietly retraced our steps to the bed of the eastern nalla and carefully tracked up its bed to the north, until it joined the main river, when we turned to the west, tracking carefully along it till we again reached the forest-line where we had left the beaters (B) to await us.

We had now completely encircled the block and found no fresh tracks in the sand anywhere, to show that the tigress had gone out of it. I was morally certain that this tigress hailed from the Machmacha forests, for I recognised her footmarks, so we determined to beat her in that direction, across the big river to the north.

As I was in charge of the arrangements, I selected a tree (at E) for M. in the river-bed near the south bank, there being enough cover in the river-bed consisting of grass and *jamun* bushes, to enable the tigress to come along it without any rushing.



KHATOLI.



I then placed out the eastern-wing stops, taking my shikari with me, so that he should see exactly how far this wing extended so that he would know how far he would have to extend the beaters in this direction.

We then went and put up the stops on the west wing, after which I sent my shikari to the beaters who were awaiting him on the fire-line (B) with orders to extend them along the footpath and then up north along the bed of the eastern nalla.

This having been done, I took up my position (at H) to the right in rear of M., for I did not intend to shoot, but only to look on at the fun or to help should the tigress pass by wounded.

In about an hour's time, the beat started and came on steadily. By the usual signs we knew that the tigress was on the move within the beat, and at last I saw her quietly slip into the river bed and walk straight towards M., who saw her at the same time and was awaiting her with his rifle to his shoulder.

She was coming along an animal-track, so never hesitated, and on M. firing, I was delighted to see her roll over in a heap.

When the beaters came up, we got down and examined her, and found her to be an old tigress, not very high but long.

After this we investigated the contents of the tiffin basket, which we took up into a cave (E) in the bank of the river. The cave was about 15 feet from the base of the river, hidden from below by a clump of *palas* bushes. On entering it we found it to be some 10 feet deep and about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, quite dry and clean, but for a lot of tigers' hair lying about or sticking on to the sides of the rock, and in front of the entrance grew a young *jamun* sapling.

Little did I think how useful my acquaintance with this cave would be at a later date, when another guest of mine wounded a tiger which took refuge in this very cave and waited for us to pass by below ; but knowing the cave, I was just in time to pull back my friend and so probably saved his life.

So M. had now broken his run of bad luck. I heard from him shortly afterwards, saying that his good luck then was continuing, for soon after leaving me he had brought to book another tiger, in another part of the district.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

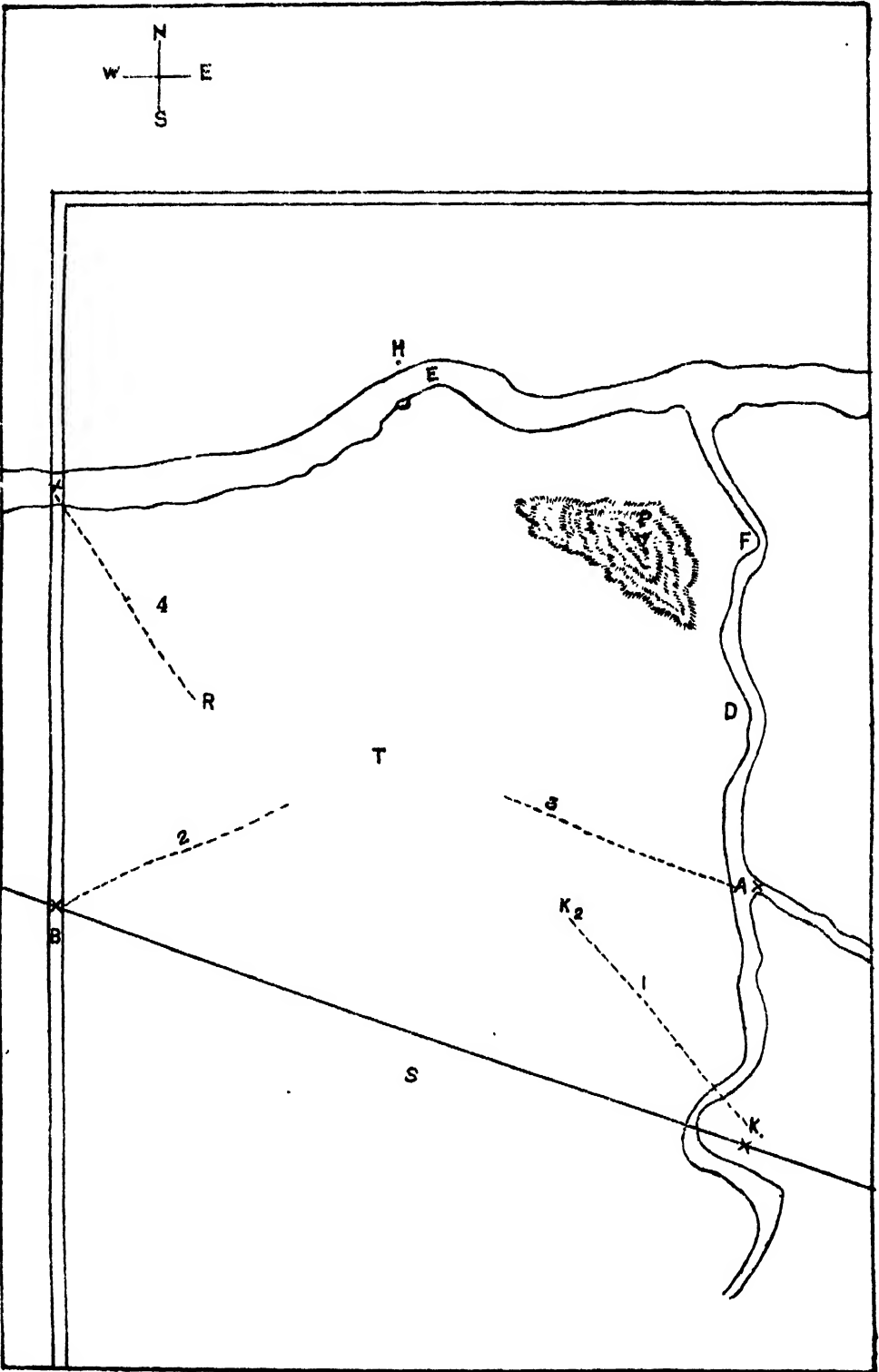
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### TIGER KILLING AND EATING A BEAR.

On one occasion, in 1893, while inspecting the Khatoli block in the north-east corner of the Jubbulpore District, on the borders of the Native State of Rewah, I came across the fresh tracks of a very large male tiger, and as I had little else to do just then, I amused myself by following up his tracks to see where he had gone to. While doing so, I also came across the fresh footprints of a large male bear, and the possibilities of their having met occurred to me, which lent an additional interest to my task.

Going up the bed of a somewhat wide nalla, the tracks led into a smaller one (A) to the east, and presently one of my men called out to me to come and see what he had found. On reaching the spot where he was standing in some long grass, I saw that the grass had been trampled down flat and smeared with blood over an area of about twenty yards square, from the appearances of which it was evident that two large animals had been fighting here for a considerable period of time. To one side of this arena was another trail of blood, and on following this for a short way, we found the





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remains of a full-grown bear—the head, feet, portions of the skin and bunches of hair lying about. Near by also was a pool of water, by which were the footprints of the tiger showing where he had drunk water after his meal.

The whole thing was perfectly clear : after a prolonged fight, the tiger had killed and eaten the bear—a thing which I had never known to occur before in all my experience, though, on one occasion, I saw a bear drive a tigress out of a beat.

A tiger who could kill a large male bear was obviously a beast worth trying for ; but as I then had only three men with me, and the jungles were very heavy all round, I was unable to beat for him there and then.

However, I immediately sent for my buffs and tied them round the block of jungle in which I suspected the tiger to be, tying one buff at the mouth of the nalla (A) where he had killed the bear, as I felt certain he would return in the evening to contemplate the scene of his late fight.

Next morning it was this buff that was reported to have been killed by the tiger, who had dragged the carcass across the bed of the larger nalla into the triangular block of jungle to the west, in which I have killed tigers repeatedly on several occasions.

By local enquiry, I learnt that this tiger had come across from the Rewah forests, and was said to be a very dark-coloured game-killer with an exceptionally nasty temper.

Hearing that he belonged to the Rewah forests, I determined to beat him in that direction, namely, to the east ; and in order to avoid beating him back over his kill, I moved further north up the bed of the nalla, and selected my post (at D) just inside the jungle with the open bed of the nalla behind me, for a tiger generally halts on reaching such an open place and so gives an opportunity for a steady shot.

Also, in view of his reputed nasty temper, I resorted to double stops, that is, placed two men together in each tree, so that they might have greater confidence in acting up to their duties. For the same reason also, I gave instructions that after standing still and shouting for five minutes, three shots were to be fired along the line of beaters, which would get the tiger on the move in the opposite direction and render it less likely to attempt a charge back over the beaters, though I knew that this would make him liable to come



along at a great pace, wherein I merely accepted the lesser of the two necessary evils, but I was depending on the open bed of the nalla behind me to pull him up and so enable me to obtain a standing shot.

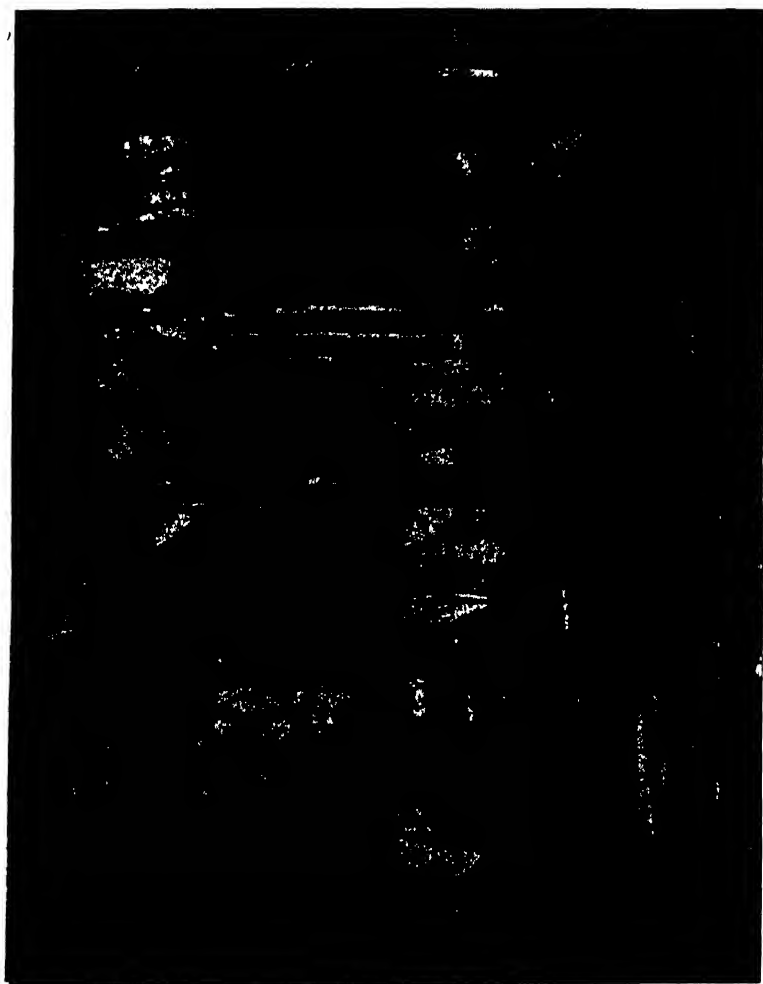
The beat commenced as directed, and about five minutes later there was a great hubbub among the stops to my left, intermingled with a considerable amount of roaring, and I was half afraid that the tiger had broken through. But when the noise quietened down, one of my orderlies, whom I had posted among the stops in that direction, shouted the intimation that the tiger was coming in my direction.

All was then quiet for about twenty minutes, when suddenly a similar hubbub commenced among my right-wing stops. But the men all acted well, and the tiger came roaring down their line at full speed.

I first saw him when he was about two hundred yards in front, coming along with great leaping bounds like a greyhound in the long grass. Wishing to make him pull up, I took out my shrill Australian whistle, and when he was within about fifty yards of my position, I gave a piercing blast. The effect was instantaneous—the tiger pulled up short with his forelegs thrust out before him in order to arrest his impetus. The next moment I had planted a bullet in his neck, bringing him in a heap on to his nose, with the blood pouring out of his mouth. I then gave him the second barrel, and re-loaded to await the arrival of the beaters.

There was no other tiger in the beat, so when the beaters came up, I got down and enjoyed a cigar while seated on the body of my prize. He was indeed an exceptionally dark-coloured tiger, very compactly and muscularly built, without an ounce of superfluous fat, very different to a fat, lumpy cattle-lifter who would think twice before attacking a bear in the manner in which this one had done. However, he had not got off scot-free from the bear, for there was a ragged wound across one of his cheeks, where the bear had apparently given him a severe clout with his paw, as well as a bad bite through his right forearm, besides a number of minor wounds and scratches on various portions of his body—so the old bear had died game. The wonder to me is that the tiger was bold enough to attack such an animal so persistently, for they usually give them a wide berth; it must have been sheer savageness of temperament that prompted the tiger to do this.





CAMP SCENE.





## CHAPTER XL.

### A CASE OF NERVES

B. was an excellent shot and could knock over a bottle every time at 150 yards with his rifle ; but he was one of those men who got terribly flurried under the stress of the least excitement, when I do not believe he would be able to hit an elephant even at five yards—not if it was a wild one—much less hit a tiger standing at ten yards.

Sitting in an arm-chair it seems incredible that any one could miss such a mark at this distance ; but I have seen inexperienced sportsmen commit this crime time after time, scarcely knowing at the moment themselves whether they were standing on their heads or their heels, loosing off their guns in a dazed way, as I have sometimes seen them, holding it almost at arm's length, their foreground and the tiger apparently going round and round, or topsy turvy, in their eyes.

This is what I call "cases of nerves" in tiger-shooting. It is not "funk," but only that their nerves have become strung up to such a pitch of excitement that when the supreme moment comes, they are practically in a state of collapse and almost fainting. This is very much commoner than might be supposed, generally among young or inexperienced sportsmen, though I have noticed it affect, on occasions, even old and experienced sportsmen, who at other times are perfectly steady.

On one occasion I had just returned from my camp where I had marked a family of five full-grown tigers, and where, I see from my diary, I contented myself merely with shooting a large panther which had been making a nuisance of itself.

So, according to a promise, B. and I started on our shoot.

The tigers having been previously regularly fed according to my orders, in anticipation of our arrival, we were able to start operations the very next morning.

I knew almost every yard of the ground, so our arrangements did not take long. As far as these arrangements went, there was only one

place that the tigers could or would come out at ; so here I placed a cot up a tree and put up B., while I went and took up a position to his left to act as a stop and look on at the fun, for I knew nothing would come where I was.

I could see B. from my tree, and after the beat had been going some time, I noticed that he seemed uneasy and shifting about a great deal ; at last a brilliant idea seemed to strike him, for suddenly he deliberately turned round and *sat with his back to the beat* and placed his feet up on to a convenient bough at the back. That is what it was—I had forgotten to arrange a comfortable branch for him to rest his feet on in the right direction—but what mattered it, for was there not a comfortable branch at the back ? and were there not jungles equally at the back as in front, so why should not the tigers appear there ?

Oh dear, oh dear ! all this fag for this !

I could not call out to him or give vent to my feelings, for just as he had made himself gloriously comfortable, I saw a huge old male tiger slip out of the jungle and commence walking slowly in B.'s direction, halting every now and then in a sleepy kind of way, apparently waiting for something, which I knew meant that more tigers were following him.

At last he halted on a rock about twenty yards from B.'s tree and stood there listening for fully five minutes, right out in the open. But B.'s innocent back never moved.

It was a painful five minutes for me, during which my feelings can better be imagined than described.

At last the tiger moved on, and was in the act of passing B., when the latter suddenly threw up his rifle and fired twice at the tiger, appearing to me as if he regularly "browned" him, at that short range.

The tiger, however, did not speak to the shot, nor gave any other signs of being hit, simply bounding rapidly out of sight and out of the beat.

We afterwards found that he had been missed clean by both shots, which we found had stuck in the ground apparently under the tiger's stomach.

The tiger having gone out of the beat, I did not give the signal for the beaters to stop, so the beat continued to advance steadily.

This failure made B. sit up a bit, and what was more to the point, he now sat facing the beat.

In about half an hour I saw B. again put up his rifle and fire two more shots. But the results were as before : no sound, no blood, and no tiger ; only the splinters of an express bullet and pieces of broken rock where it had struck over the tiger's back, which this time had stood within ten yards of the shooter.

In the meanwhile, the beaters and stops were making frantic efforts to prevent the remaining three tigers, who had been frightened by the shots in front of them breaking out of the beat ; but they failed, and thus all five tigers escaped.

I was very disgusted ; and as a thunderstorm was threatening, I was glad of the excuse to return to camp.

The next morning we moved camp to where I had previously sent on men to tie out buffs, and where a very troublesome tigress, who was supposed to have lost her cubs, had lately taken up her abode to the great danger of the men working in those forests, whom she had charged on several occasions.

On the following morning a kill was reported. On this occasion I told B. that I would not put myself so entirely out of the running as I did on the last occasion ; and to this he agreed.

I knew that this tigress was a regular she-devil, so took the precaution of placing double stops, *i.e.*, two together up each tree, which gives them confidence to resist attempts on the part of the tiger to bluff them. When the stops had been placed in this manner, with a plentiful supply of stones in the waist-cloth of each, B. and I drew lots for our positions, the ladders having already been arranged only about twenty-five yards apart.

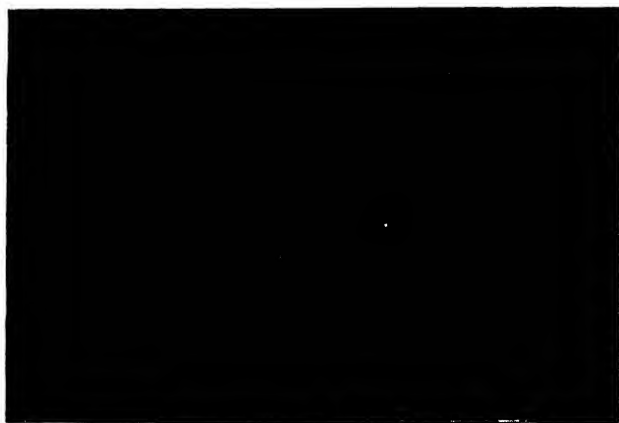
In sending the men round to fetch up the beat, I gave them orders to stand still and shout, all together, for ten minutes before making any advance, which lessens the chance of the beaters being charged by cantankerous tigers such as this, for the delay in the advance gives the beast time to change her first ideas and to choose her direction.

The beat had been in progress about half an hour, when the tigress gave us a lively demonstration of her presence within it by repeatedly charging and roaring at our left stops, who, however, were



staunch, driving her back time after time with showers of stones and sticks. She charged along the whole line of stops in this manner, the men howling and throwing their axes at her as she passed.

At last I caught sight of her, coming at a tearing mad gallop straight in our direction. B. did not attempt to fire, though at that moment she was anybody's "bird." A branch being in the way, I had to wait until she was practically under my tree, when giving my rifle a cant downwards to allow for her pace, I fired, the bullet striking her in the nape of her neck, breaking it and killing her instantly, though her impetus carried her on in a series of cart-wheel summersaults down a sloping bank that was behind me, at the foot of which she fetched up in a heap, half buried in a débris of dead leaves.



To say the most, it was a brilliant fluke—and poor B. was lost in admiration of the shot, and later on set on foot a lot of nonsense, when he returned to civilisation, regarding my shooting abilities.

Thus, of the six tigers whom we had enclosed in two beats, we bagged only one.

B. left me with a promise from me that I would give him another chance next season, for this season was over as far as shooting was concerned, for I see in my diary the entry: "rained from 5 A.M. to 6 P.M.," for it was the commencement of the rainy season.

So we will skip from here to the next hot-weather season when B. again joined me in camp, with R., whom I had also asked to join me. In my diary I see a note as follows:—"Inspected

the coppiced areas ; all the coolies came in a body and begged to be allowed to commence cutting again, or they will starve. To write to D. C. to ask if he can help with famine funds. About twenty maunds of *mohwa* collected in closed forests. My orderly, Dilliput, has got cholera ; all night up with him."

"28th.—Halt. Received Divisional Accounts for March ; checked and submitted them. Poor Dilliput died under the kanats of my tent at 7-30 P.M."

The poor fellow had been my faithful servant for many years, and I felt his loss sadly. His last request was for a drink of tea. I saw that there was no possible hope for him, so complied with this last request ; and having drunk it, he suddenly staggered to his feet and saluted me, and immediately fell back dead.

I then marched on to the next camp where B. and R. joined me by rail.

I found two cholera corpses had been thrown into the stream from which we obtained our drinking water for the camp. So though we had arranged to have a try after the tigers in this neighbourhood, I at once moved our camp to a more safe place, which we reached very soon.

Buff's having been tied out overnight, we found on our arrival that a kill had taken place and that beaters had already been collected, so off we started on the war path at once.

On this occasion there were two tigers to be dealt with, a large male tiger and his mate.

As B. had not yet shot a tiger, he was placed in the best place, with R. to his right, and myself among the stops, from whence I could obtain a good view of all the fun that was to come.

Soon after the beat commenced, I saw a huge old male tiger slip out of the cover and walk quietly towards B.

R. also spotted him and raised his rifle, but as it was clearly B.'s tiger, he lowered it again and awaited events.

The tiger continued to advance quietly, until he was immediately opposite B., broadside on, about 25 or 30 yards off on the side of a little ridge.

On seeing him thus, B. raised his rifle and fired—of course with his usual result of missing him clean, for the tiger at first merely

stopped, and then realising that something dangerous had happened, made a rush, when both B. and R. fired at him again together, one of them apparently hitting him this time, for he spoke but did not fall.

R. said he had hit the beast, but could not say where, while B. said he was not sure whether he had hit him or not.

At any rate the tiger had escaped through the stops, so we allowed the beat to come on.

After a bit the tigress appeared at a trot, headed, also for B., who fired, and said he wounded her, but she got clean away between B. and R., and we never saw her again.

It was now late, so we were obliged to return rather crest-fallen to camp.

I was engaged in having a tub, when I heard a great commotion in camp, the chief notes of which were the howlings of a woman. Guessing at once what had probably happened, I dressed hurriedly, and went out and found that one of the beaters had shirked the last beat, counting on not being missed ; so, being ignorant of what had finally taken place, he went the wrong way and had stumbled on top of one of the wounded tigers which had killed him ; another man who was also with him, escaped and brought the news to camp.

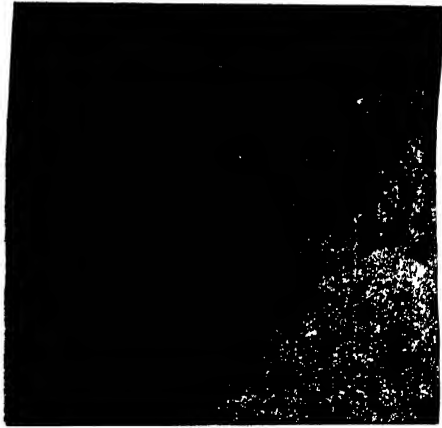
Next morning we searched the jungles for the wounded tigers, but could find not the least trace of them.

With the possibilities of wounded tigers being about these jungles, we were now obliged to leave them severely alone, and to transfer our operations to an entirely different block ; where I shot a tiger that killed and ate a bear, and where the former D. S. P., with me, killed another tiger. So this was the third time we were going to beat this same block.

On this occasion, we found the kill on the forest fire-line at the point (B) where the footpath from Rewah intersected it.

The kill had been dragged off into the centre of the triangle between the two river-beds. So leaving instructions to my shikari to line out the beaters along the footpath at the south when we sent him word, we proceeded down the river-bed to the east, keeping a sharp look-out for tracks leading out as we went.

We passed the cave (E), where M. and I on a former occasion had had tiffin, after killing a tiger at this point. This cave was about fifteen feet above the bed of the river, situated in the face of the almost perpendicular bank and concealed from below by a clump of *palas* bushes, among which grew a *jammun* sapling which projected up above the cave and touched the entrance ; this cave was about ten feet deep and some  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, clean and dry, with some tigers' hair lying about in it and sticking to the sides of the rock, which showed it to be a favourite hiding place for tigers. I give this passing note as this cave will figure again later.



Having passed beyond this cave, we turned south into another nalla, and selected a post for the guns at a point (F), a few hundred yards further down

B. having had his chance on the previous occasion, I now placed R. in the best position, and having also placed the stops down both the beds of the rivers, which formed the two sides of the triangle, I sent word for the beat to start.

About half an hour after the commencement of the beat, I saw the tiger head straight for R., who fired and knocked it over, but the beast picked himself up and rushed away roaring, to the right stops.

When the beat was over we learnt that no one had seen anything of the wounded tiger, and on further enquiry, we found that some of the right-wing stops had not yet turned up. On going in their direction, we found the men still up their trees who told us that they had remained where they were, because they had seen the wounded

tiger go along their line, and that as far as they knew he had not yet gone out.

On proceeding further down the line, we found a boy up a tree, in front of the cave (E) aforementioned, who said that he was afraid to come down from his tree because he had seen the tiger go into some bushes in front of him and not come out again.

Hearing this I knew at once where the tiger had gone ; but R., not knowing the whereabouts of the cave, was about to pass below it, when I jumped forward and pulled him back by force, otherwise in another moment he would have had the wounded tiger on the top of his head, for the tiger was now already growling at us.

Then placing B. and R. up in two trees which commanded the exit of the cave, I went round above the cave, and by stretching forward my hand I was able to grasp the sapling which grew up immediately in front, touching the mouth of the cave, and shook it as I shouted at the tiger within below me.

The tiger immediately gave a roar, and shot out like a rocket between B. and R., and they both missed him like men. By the time I regained my equilibrium, the tiger was almost out of the reach of my smooth-bore, which I always use on such occasions ; I nevertheless had a snap-shot at the tiger and saw him fall over to the shot behind a bush.

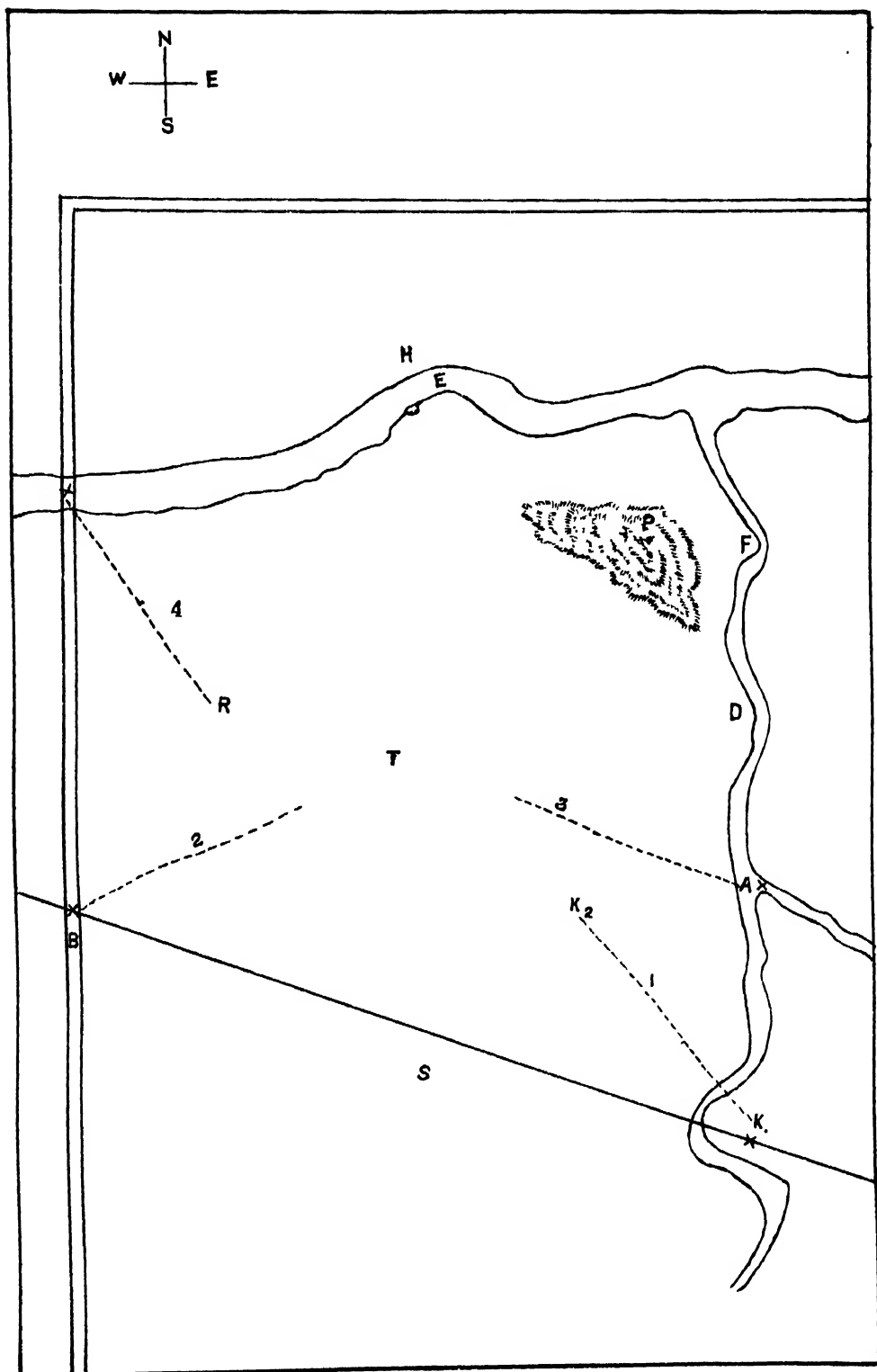
We then sent for the elephant and went to look, but found no tiger ; nor did we ever see the beast again.

This is the third description that I have given of the beating of this same triangular block of jungle, and on each occasion I beat it differently.

On the first occasion from south to north (S. to E.), when M. was with me.

The second time from west to east (B. to D.) when I killed the tiger that ate the bear.

The third time is the one just described. But as I write, my son H. reminds me of a fourth occasion, when he and I together shot a large male tiger of 9 feet 7 inches, in this very triangular block, on which occasion we beat it from north-west to south-east (R. to P.). Regarding this tiger I see from my diary that I had had my buffs tied out for this tiger for several days, but in spite of my



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buffs already being there, a certain globe-trotter gallantly went and tied up his buffs alongside of mine; needless to say he got nothing, for such people have to take the consequences of their own acts.

We made a forced march, and caught the old man napping—he was rarely doing anything else! I well remember the look of surprise on his face as he looked up while wiping himself with a towel, having just performed his morning ablutions outside his tent, to see the whole of my party marching past his camp, heading towards the sacred jungles, where, within two hours of passing him, we shot the old tiger for which he had been doing his level best to get in spite of my buffs having been tied there before his arrival.

But to return to our muttons. We now moved on to the Mahanaddi, to a spot where I knew of a family of several tigers and here, as before, the news of a kill awaited us.

This time also I placed R. to obtain the first shot.

I also took the precaution of placing myself immediately behind R., in case of a repetition of wounded tigers passing on.

All went well, and a tiger duly appeared before R., who knocked it over: there was no mistaking that R. meant to make quite sure of this beast at any rate, for he did not cease fire until he had put no less than seven shots in the beast as it lay before him.

The result of this needless fusilade was that the remaining three tigers all broke back over the beaters, and though we heard them roar as they charged their way through the beaters, fortunately without doing any of them any damage, we saw naught of them.

Thus in three beats we had enclosed no less than seven tigers, of which only one was bagged.

After this our party broke up. I returned to the railway station to meet a certain official, who, on hearing that my orderly had recently died of cholera under the *kanats* of my tent, immediately sent one of his men to tell me not to come near him and then at once went back by the next train, neither eating nor drinking anything. But for all this caution, he has not been able to dodge the last reaper of us all, for he is now dead, while I, in spite of cholera and other such every-day surroundings of my life, am still to the fore. Here again, I think “nerves” have a great deal to do in



such matters, and I think that a man who is afraid of such diseases is the most liable of any to contract the very thing he fears most.

Before closing, I will quote one more case of "nerves" that came within the experience of my son H., who had asked an acquaintance, who had never seen a tiger in its wild state, to come out with him and have a try.

H. brought two tigers out in the beat, one of which passed and repassed twice before X., but for some reason he did not fire, though the tiger was in the open and within 25 yards of him each time.

Both tigers got away temporarily, but were both killed on foot by H. within two hours, throughout which X., though present, did not give any help.

The first tiger, or rather tigress, charged and got home so close to H. that one of her claws actually tore his coat, before she dropped dead at his feet, with two bullets in her throat and the powder burning her hair.

While following the second wounded tiger, the latter suddenly got up at their feet, whereon H. browned it with both barrels from his hip, but hit it too far back, so that the tiger was able to go on. X. was standing still as if in a dream, so H. snatching a rifle, a Mauser, now that his own was empty, ran after the vanishing tiger, for he knew instinctively that their safety lay in keeping him in sight.

The tiger was in the act of crossing an open glade, when H., foolishly in his excitement of the moment, burst through the cover into the glade; then taking careful aim at the tiger behind his shoulder, he fired.

On receiving the shot, which was an inch too far back to reach the heart, the tiger commenced to spin round and round howling and trying to bite his wound.

In the meanwhile H. was standing in the open, forty yards away with a small-bore single-barrelled magazine rifle, the Lee-Metford action of which causes the inevitable *click! click!* in reloading.

This noise caught the attention of the tiger, who immediately straightened himself towards H., and commenced to advance at a quick crouching walk, growling, and with his ears laid back, meaning business.

Having only a light-bore single-barrelled rifle to depend on which he knew at a short distance carried high, H. quite rightly waited for

the tiger to come nearer, before he risked his last and only bullet on which depended his life.

Allowing the tiger to come within about 25 yards,—that is, just before his rushing distance,—he fired aiming low, at about his chin.

He saw the tiger rear itself up into the air and fall backwards ; but waited to see no more and made for the nearest tree, up which he climbed, and from thence sent several more shots into the whitish heap he could see lying on the grass.

Then getting down, he sat on the top of his prize and shouted to the others to come up.

The first shot in this charge proved to have hit this tiger on the right eyebrow, thus braining him ; though very nearly a miss, for half an inch higher up the bullet would have struck on the curve of the skull, from which it would have glanced off, when H. would certainly have been a dead man. All is well that ends well. I still have the skin, with the bullet-hole in the eyebrow, and the skull traversed by the bullet. After these two narrow escapes in one day, while firing at a quail (a come down from tigers), H.'s gun burst open in his hands, probably having been injured by the fall it had had on the previous day, when it had been dashed out of H.'s hands by the wounded tigress when she charged him. This had a sad sequel, for a piece of brass out of the base of the cartridge lodged in the corner of his left eye, thus destroying the retina and the sight of that eye permanently.

This was a pure case of "nerves" on the part of X., for when H. went in to have his eye medically attended to, he placed his trained shikaris at the disposal of X., who then shortly afterwards shot a male tiger on foot like a man that had been beaten up to him. After his first experience of nervousness, he apparently got completely over the strangeness of having a real live wild tiger before him.

## CHAPTER XLI.

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### A NIGHT WATCH FOR BISONS.

Night-shooting is the form of sport which requires the least ability, expense and physical exertion, and therefore apparently appeals most to the professional shikari type, who are famous hands at sitting still. All being fish that comes to their net, it does not trouble them that at night it is often impossible to see what kind of animal they are firing at—shooting fawns, does, and immature stags with equal indiscrimination while sitting up over “runs,” salt-licks and water—being quite uninfluenced by such considerations as the fairness or unfairness of their methods, as long as these serve in bringing grist to their mill in the easiest, cheapest, and least troublesome way.

Again, among the more conscientious sportsmen, the chances in this form of sport of the tyro, the sluggard, and the most energetic and experienced hunter are very much on a par. For reasons such as these, this kind of shooting is often looked down on, and rightly so when, as Sterndale remarks, “who with the soul of a hunter would consent to sit all night in a pit or on a tree if he could circumvent the quarry by open day”.

The last stipulation is the crux of the matter. In my opinion night-shooting is only legitimate when, for some special reason, all other means of circumventing the game by open day are impracticable, such as when the jungles are too thorny or otherwise impenetrable for stalking, the absence of beaters, in the case of panthers and man-eating tigers, whose habits admit generally of no other means in bringing about their downfall, or in cases of temporary necessity when food is not procurable in any other way.

But there is, no doubt, much to be said on both sides, for, in spite of its reprehensible aspects in taking advantage of a poor brute’s thirst or hunger at night—when by laws of Nature he has a right to consider himself safe from his greatest enemy, man, who should then be asleep—this form of shooting nevertheless possesses several of the true elements of “sport,” such as that of uncertainty, an all pervad-

ing sense of danger, the enjoyment of the mysticisms of Nature in her most uncanny and ghostly garb, and the opportunities of observing the ways and habits of wild animals and birds in their own domain.

All very enjoyable in themselves, but the fact nevertheless remains that success under these conditions is not due to any merit on the part of the hunter himself, whereby a great deal of the gilt is rubbed from the gingerbread ; for I take it as an axiom that the degree of "merit" in sport depends on what the hunter does *actively*, or has done for him, and the manner thereof, to *cause* the game to come within range of his rifle. By merely sitting still he does nothing active, in the spirit of the above axiom, to *cause* the game to come before him, and therefore can claim no personal merit when he secures an animal by these means.

However, there are some who appear to think otherwise. Saunderson, for instance, who in his book called "Thirteen Years Among the Wild Beasts of India," speaks of night-shooting as "the fair outwitting of the subtle beast on his own ground." But, personally, I fail to see where the merits of either "wit" or "fairness" come in in this kind of sport, for any fool who can sit still long enough, over "runs," salt-licks and water, can shoot animals in this way, for this kind of "outwitting" requires no wit at all.

So let us honestly admit the fact, and look on this form of sport as legitimate, only in the sense, and in the cases, afore-mentioned.

But when all is said and done, the results of this kind of shooting, both from a physical and material point of view, are very disappointing. To sit thus hour after hour in a cramped position, being eaten alive by mosquitoes, afraid to move and breathing malaria, soon rubs the gilt off the romance, for that is what success entails ; while to ease one's limbs by shifting about, knocking off mosquitoes, smoking and other actions equally idiotic under the circumstances, will spell failure as far as the shooting of game is concerned.

Nevertheless there are few of us, especially in our younger sporting days, who have not cheerfully undergone all these tortures time after time, in spite of the failures being ninety per cent ; such are the fascinations of the solitary night watch to sportsmen.

For tigers alone, I have sat up at night many hundreds of times when circumstances prevented me from trying for them in any

other way, but all the tigers I have shot in this way I could count almost on the fingers of one hand.

To illustrate the delights of the solitary night watch on the ground, I will give an account of one of my experiences in this line, when I sat up one night for bison when hard pushed to supply my camp with food and being unable at the time to procure it in any other way.

It was in April during the hot weather of 1871 in the Ahiri forest of Chanda, Camp Moonger. I was very busy at this time and could not afford the leisure to go after big game in the usual manner, and though I was able to pick up enough small game on the way to keep myself going, my unfortunate camp followers were very nearly starving, for their supplies had run out and the new lot sent for had not yet arrived, so a big animal had to be shot for them by hook or by crook.

Within two miles of my camp was a small rocky nalla, almost quite dry, except for a few pools here and there, which afforded the only supply of water within many miles of that part of the country.

Consequently all the animals of the surrounding forests resorted habitually every night to these pools, and their footmarks in the morning showed that they had fairly jostled with each other, especially bison.

The moon being a little past the full, I determined to sit up over one of these pools, so while proceeding to the scene of my work in the morning, I caused all the pools to be blocked up, all except the most likely one nearest my camp, by which were also the fresh footmarks of a very large panther, who had drunk at this pool on the night previous. I first thought of putting up bits of newspaper dangling at the end of a piece of string at the other pools, but changed my mind when I remembered that this has a very terrifying effect on wild animals when they come upon it suddenly, either by day or by night, and is apt to scare them for the time being completely out of the neighbourhood. There being no tree conveniently situated by the pool I had selected, I had a shallow pit dug in the bank and hedged it round with a light screen of brushwood.

Hurrying over an early dinner, I arrived at my post just as the sun was setting, and having made myself comfortable, I told my men to

bring my elephant for me at sunrise next morning and then sent them all back to camp, for experience had taught me that it was always best to be alone when sitting up at night for wild animals.

Soon after they left, some long-tailed peacocks came down to drink and ran back to the jungles. The shadows then gradually lengthened and grew darker and darker as the light of day merged into the darker grey of twilight ; there was a deathly stillness in the air accentuated only by the loud and weird *cheech!* of the ghostly flitting night-hawk in the distance, and nearer, by the monotonous trilling of the little crickets under the neighbouring rocks and stones.

*Whirr ! thud*—another and another—three little brown objects dropped from the air and lay like stones for a few moments and then glided swiftly forward to the water's edge, drank and vanished from whence they had come ; they were sand-grouse, of whom several relays came and went in the same mysterious manner.

Twilight in the tropics is remarkably short, and suddenly I found myself in total and utter darkness, the kind of darkness one can almost feel, soft and throbbing, for even the stars were hidden by a dust haze and the moon had not yet risen. Here I was on the ground miles away from any other human beings, in the midst of a primeval jungle, with all its lurking possibilities around me and a darkness such that I could not even see my hand before my face ; conscious that I was clearly visible all the time to the eyes of any feline that happened to be prowling around, who mistaking me for some animal, might silently stalk and spring on me at any moment. What a very different place this seemed by daylight and how gruesomely lonely now, when the companionship of even a dirty little Maria would have been a comfort, though he would be quite useless in the event of an attack. How utterly helpless one feels under such conditions, and what a fool to have voluntarily given over all the advantages to a possibly lurking midnight foe. The previous night's footmarks of the panther, which I had seen in the morning, had now a new significance ; what if he should jump on me unawares from behind. I had no protection for my head except a cloth cap, so I would probably know nothing about it as the Irishman said, until I was dead.

There was also a man-eating tigress (whom I killed soon after this) not so very far from here, and it was quite on the cards that she

might come round this way. Oh, Lord ! what was that ? a stealthy crack of a stick in the darkness behind me, followed by *sniff ! sniff ! sniff !* unmistakably feline ; that which I had been dreading was now actually taking place, *I was being stalked !* Oh, the joys of the solitary night watch on the ground ! What a fool I had been to have voluntarily placed myself in such a position. I was afraid to expose my human identity by shouting, for fear the animal might be the man-eater, and yet I hesitated to spoil sport, perhaps unnecessarily, by firing off a shot, though I felt strongly inclined to do so. So I loosened my hunting-knife and lay back quietly to await events for in that intensely pitch black darkness I could do nothing else.

Whatever the animal was, it was evidently very uncertain as to my identity, for the sniffing continued and then drew closer and closer until I could stand it no longer, so snatching out my handkerchief I waved it over my head and listened. After a few moments of breathless suspense, I heard stealthy footsteps retreating through the jungle ; thank goodness, it was evidently only a panther. I hung my handkerchief over the back of my screen and then again lay down to await the rising of the moon. The handkerchief I knew would, in the meanwhile, keep off all ordinary animals, while if the man-eater contemplated an attack she would be certain to go for the handkerchief first, which would give me at least a chance of using my rifle.

Thus I lay in utter darkness for another hour, listening to the numerous stealthy noises in the jungles around.

As time went on, the darkness became less intense, the blackness around became broken, and retreated between the lighter figures that now took form and shape in the growing light ; the dust haze cleared and revealed a twinkling star spangled sky ; but gradually the stars, too, paled under the growing light from the East, whence the golden disc of the moon began to show over a black horizon of trees, climbing rapidly, higher and higher, up to a certain point, where it appeared to come to rest, swimming in a clear and cloudless sky, flooding the landscape with its golden glory of soft, mellow light.

With the removal of that appallingly oppressive darkness, my position assumed a decidedly more cheery aspect. I could now see to defend myself. Certainly, the solitary night watch was not half so bad ! Thus is man swayed by the influences of the moment, and such

are the inconsistencies of his nature. The mosquitoes were certainly troublesome and I wanted badly to have a smoke, but these were minor drawbacks to the prospects of sport which were before me. I now removed my handkerchief. The nearer objects were standing out almost as clearly as in daylight, but the landscape in the background wore a more ghostly aspect. The shadowy forms of bison and other wild animals, at intervals, crossed and re-crossed the nalla, or wandered aimlessly about up and down its bed, but always out of the reach of my rifle ; but I nevertheless stuck to my post stolidly, for I felt certain that they would sooner or later come to drink at my pool.

I was sitting thus silently, when I heard some leaves rustle behind and above me ; so turning my head only, very gently round, I looked over my shoulder, and it was as well that I was cautious in my movement, for there, within ten yards of me, silhouetted against the sky, looming large and black, was a huge old bull-buffalo.

Now, these beasts are in the habit of bluffing feline into retreat by charging them at sight, and, consistently with this habit, they do the same when they happen to spot a pot-hunting shikari sitting in a pit at night ; with this difference, that finding the man at their mercy, they proceed to dig him out and then pound him to a jelly. I have known of several cases in which natives have been killed at night by wild buffaloes in this way.

So my position at that moment was an extremely critical one, for the monster was gazing intently in my direction, and the slightest movement on my part might bring him down on top of my head, before I had a chance even of turning round to fire. He evidently suspected something, for he kept me thus on tenter-hooks for nearly half an hour, without the slightest move on the part of either of us. My left leg was doubled up awkwardly under me, and the continued strain caused me intense pain, both in my leg and in my neck, for I had not dared to change the position of either, as I watched the beast over my shoulder : all this while a venomous mosquito was dancing a fantastic fandango on the tip of my nose, viciously piercing his poisoned dart into all the most tender portions. " Oh, the delights of the solitary night watch ! " At last, to my infinite relief, the buffalo moved off and, as he appeared to be about to come down to the



water, I sat still and waited, but to my disappointment he failed to turn up.

The sound of his wandering steps in the leaves died away gradually, and all was still again, except for the weird, though monotonous, calls of several species of night-jars. The "*cheech!*" of the one at twilight has been changed now for its nocturnal note, the ghastly "*chuckoo! chuckoo!*" ending with "*whoo! whoo!*" as it flits with a soft swoop from one tree to another. The natives call this bird the "*Churaell*," the "herald of death," and well they might. I never thought much of this, or any other superstition, until it was brought home to me one night with terrible reality when one very dear to me lay dying. On this occasion, these birds—at other times comparatively few and far between in this neighbourhood—literally mobbed the house; one in particular repeatedly came and lit on the sill of the window, where it continued its uncanny "*chuckoo! chuckoo! chuckoo!*" I took out my gun and loaded it, but every time I approached the window, it vanished, only to return again the moment I retired. The next night, when the dear one lay dead, there was not a single *Churaell* to be heard in the neighbourhood. What was the meaning of their frantic mobbing on the night previous, and their sudden disappearance afterwards? How did they *know*? Natives universally believe firmly in the significance of the *Churaell's* mobbing. Verily, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

But to return to our night watch. Apart from the notes of this accursed bird, there were those of several other species of night-jars equally weird and monotonous; "*k-o-o-k!...koo!*" and another which sounds like two wooden balls being struck against each other, or a pebble flung along a sheet of ice, "*cut!...cut!...cut!...cut-r-r-r-r-a!*" These nocturnal sounds, coming from different spots on the moonlit landscape, served only to emphasise the utter loneliness of the scene. A frog croaked sleepily at intervals in the pool below, as the dreary hours of waiting dragged slowly along. An intense longing for sleep had almost overpowered me, when suddenly I became conscious that some large animal was coming quietly over the sandy bed of the nalla in my direction. However, it proved to be only a cow-bison whom I allowed to go scot-free, in spite of the fact that I

was here ostensibly to procure meat for camp. She had scarcely passed ten yards beyond the level of my position when she suddenly gave a shrill cry of alarm and fled wildly down the nalla.

Finding all the other pools blocked, the animals became apparently impatient of their thirst, for relays of them, time after time, came in the direction of my pool, but always with the same result. Halting half-way down the bank, they stood and watched for a while, and then suddenly bolted back with frightened calls of alarm.

There was not a breath of air moving, so I could not understand it, and for a long time was puzzled to think what the cause of their alarm could be, when the suspicion gradually dawned on me that perhaps I was not the only watcher at that pool that night.

At length my suspicions became confirmed, when a black elongated feline form shot out from under the bank below me in pursuit of a herd of cheetle, who at that moment went fleeing down the bed of the river ; failing to come up with them, the pursuer halted, gazed for a few moments longingly in the direction in which the deer had disappeared, then turning slowly round he walked leisurely up to the water and, crouching down, commenced to drink ; his shoulder-blades jutting up black above the line of the rest of his body, in the way so characteristic to all feline when drinking in the crouching attitude. Realising that I would not have much chance of shooting any game as long as this brute remained there, I took careful aim at him and fired.

A tremendous uproar followed, but as the smoke hung densely in the night air, I was unable to fire my second barrel. I was thankful I had not done so, for the next moment I heard rapidly galloping footsteps, with an accompaniment of series of guttural roars, heading straight in my direction, and the next instant a dark form came crashing headlong through the bushes and tumbled into the grass within six feet of me, where he lay choking and gasping for about ten minutes. I could not see him, and as I had no wish to court a certain mauling, I kept as still as death. "Oh, the joys of the solitary night watch!" Those ten minutes seemed like an hour ; but at last he got up again and painfully dragged himself away in another direction—much to my relief—his

arrival in my proximity having been a pure accident ; but I heard him come to a halt again about forty yards further on, so fearing that he might become aware of my presence and execute a vengeful stalk, I proceeded to put a greater distance still between him and myself ; therefore, slipping quietly into the nalla, I crossed over to the further bank.

My shot, of course, had scared all the animals in the immediate neighbourhood, so there was little hope of anything turning up here for a long time to come, and I proceeded to wander forth with my rifle, in the hope of being able to pick up something worth getting, beyond the disturbed area.

Thus I roamed on for about an hour, halting every few yards to peer at different objects, for one's imagination plays extraordinary tricks with one's sight in this ghostly light. The shadowy forms of animals frequently came in view, but each time I refrained from firing, as I was unable to see whether the quarry before me was such as to justify my shooting it.

At last only one hour remained for daylight and I had not yet succeeded in securing any meat for camp. I was feeling very disgusted with my luck, when I spied the form of some big black animal standing under the dark shade of a tree, so I chanced it and let drive, and immediately afterwards heard it fall over with a gurgling bellow, sounding like *mer-r-r-r*, so I knew I had shot either a buffalo or bison, but whether it was a male or female, I could not tell. Re-loading my rifle immediately, I circled cautiously round to the spot where the beast lay kicking frantically, and put an end to its agony with another shot ; and then, to my disappointment, I saw it was a cow-buffalo. However, it would serve excellently in supplying meat for camp, for the majority of the men with me were of a caste that did not scruple much as to the quality of the meat they ate, especially when they were hard up.

Dawn was now breaking, so after marking the spot carefully where the dead buffalo lay, I returned in the direction of the pool. While on my way back I rolled over a fine cheetle stag with a lucky snapshot as he dashed across my path.

On reaching the nalla again, I examined, on the sand, the foot-marks of the feline that I had wounded, and found them to be those





of a very large male panther, so the one who had stalked me during the early part of the night—whom I had frightened off with my handkerchief—was probably his mate.

The sun was now rising above the horizon, and I could see my elephant coming along in the distance ; so I climbed up to my lately deserted post and commenced to collect my things together. I was thus engaged, when I heard a slight noise in the bed of the nalla below me, and on looking round I beheld, to my surprise, a beautiful bull-bison who had evidently come down at the last moment for a drink, having been kept away all night from the water. He was standing with one foot partially raised, gazing intently in the direction of the oncoming elephant ; a beautiful sight as he stood thus with his head raised high and his nostrils widely dilated. I saw that I had not a moment to lose, so quickly snatching up and cocking my rifle, I fired into his shoulder, giving him the second barrel as he dashed back into the jungle. Rushing down into the nalla I followed, as quickly as possible, on the blood-tracks of the wounded bull, and was shortly joined by my men, who came running up on hearing my shot.

Proceeding thus for a few hundred yards, we came suddenly on the bull, lying on the ground on his side, apparently dead, but to make sure, I took a heavy broad-bladed spear which had been presented to me by a Brinjara *naick*, and plunged it into the beast's side where his heart should be. The effect was startling in the extreme, for it seemed to galvanise the beast, who immediately sprang to his feet, nearly upsetting me as he did so, and dashed crashing through the saplings, which soon broke the spearshaft which was sticking out from his side. But he only went a few yards and then tumbled over dead. My Mahomedan orderly, however, was not going to be done out of his meat, so whipping out a long keen knife, he plunged it into the throat of the animal, and after some trouble succeeded in making it "halal."

I then got on to my elephant and proceeded to look up the wounded panther, whom we found stone dead close to the spot where I had last heard him ; a splendid beast, measuring 7 feet 6 inches. So, altogether, I had not done so badly. With a panther and a cheetle as my portion, and a buffalo and a *halalled* bison for

the men, there were great rejoicings in camp, for all were able to share in the spoils.

It will be noticed that I got all that I most wanted in the eleventh hour, which serves to illustrate the uncertainty of luck in all branches of sport ; and also the fact that more is to be obtained by actively moving about than by sitting still.

For a greater part of that night I had had no luck at all, while on more than one occasion I had cause to feel decidedly uncomfortable ; so, as a particular form of amusement, to sit on the ground alone in a dark and feline-infested forest, cannot be recommended ; for things in general, both material and sentimental, appear very different at night in such places to what they do by day.

The bison I shot on this occasion was a magnificent animal, and in his prime, measuring 6 feet 3 inches at the shoulder, with perfect horns. On taking the head into camp, my attention was drawn to the fact that there was something rattling about in its forehead like a pea in a box. There was a mark of an old wound, and on cutting into it, I found a cavity from which we extracted a small round iron bullet, fired evidently from a native gun. Had this animal been a buffalo, this bullet would have pierced him to the brain, but on the massive frontal development of bone of the bison it had had little or no effect. On several occasions I have lost bison by trying frontal shots, and I have even seen it recorded of a case in which a bullet punched out a portion of a bison's brain like a piece of tallow-candle and yet the animal escaped.

This massive frontal development of bone is clearly given to the bison to enable them to withstand the terrific shocks while fighting among themselves, so it is not difficult to imagine that their brain probably also has a peculiar vitality to enable it to withstand these shocks. So, at its best, the head shot at a bison is but a risky one. Not that under favourable circumstances they cannot be killed in this manner, and that instantly ; but, as a general rule, avoid it. The liver is a more certain shot and a much larger mark than the heart. If the heart be missed, there are no other organs near it which, if struck, are sufficiently vital to prevent the animal from escaping, while in the neighbourhood of the liver are the kidneys and the paunch, and the three together form a very large mark, any

of which being broken will result in the animal being crippled or choked to death within a very short distance of the spot where he is fired at.

To the tattered and insect-eaten remnants of my diary for the month of May 1871, I find pinned a note of the measurements of this bison shot by me over the water in the month previous, in April. These measurements read as follows :—

“A very large brute—quite black. Height at shoulder, 6 feet 3 inches =  $18\frac{3}{4}$  hands ; length from tip of the nose to the tip of the tail, 13 feet 9 inches ; round the neck, 5 feet 5 inches ; round the body, 7 feet  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches.”



## CHAPTER XLII.

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### A MAN-EATING PANTHER, SLAYER OF 119 PERSONS.

*March 1889.*

On my arrival in the District of Mandla, I heard woeful tales of the destruction to human life which was being caused by a feline said to be a man-eating tigress in the neighbourhood of a part of the district known as the "Chaurassi Zamindari" or the "Zamindari of 84 villages." It had been at work for about a year, and in that time had killed over a hundred persons, on an average one person in every three days. The beast was a constant nightmare to the inhabitants of the country, for no one was safe even in houses, for on several occasions the beast tore its way through the walls or roof at night and extracted its victim. So great was the terror which this lurking demon inspired that a large number of villages in this neighbourhood were entirely deserted by the natives and left to be overgrown with jungle.

Government forest works suffered in consequence, for none of the panic-stricken natives would consent to work in them; in fact, the works came to a standstill altogether, until I imported men from a distance; but in time, even these began to bolt.

I was naturally very keen to have a try at ridding the country of this fearful pest; so as soon as the rainy season was over I started off for this locality, having as an excuse a boundary dispute to settle between the Government and Zamindari forests, though one would have thought the circumstance of the loss of human lives in itself would have been reason enough for a Government Officer being specially deputed to destroy this animal; but had I not had a strictly official reason for visiting this locality, I probably would not have been able to have gone there at all.

On arriving in the neighbourhood it struck me at once that all the field "machans" or platforms from which the natives watched their fields at night were of a most extraordinary height, being some 24 feet from the ground, while the cross-bars or rungs were placed a





good six feet apart, whereas ordinarily these "machans" are never more than ten or twelve feet high, and the cross-bars are usually close together.

On enquiring the reason for this, I was told that they were made thus in order to make it more difficult for the "tigress" to climb up, for she had frequently climbed up into even these tall machans and carried off men from them. Now, I have never heard of a *tigress* climbing up into a machan, 24 feet high, while I have frequently known man-eating panthers to do so, so for the first time I began to suspect that this man-eater was not a tigress at all, but a man-eating panther.

My suspicions were soon confirmed, for shortly after my arrival, some men, on hearing that I had come after the man-eater, came to me and stated that they had found a place in the jungles where a human being had apparently been killed and eaten by some wild animal.

I at once set out for the spot, and on arriving found the marks of dried blood on the grass and stones, and fragments of clothes and human hair scattered about, also some human bones; but the "kill" had taken place some ten days previously, so that the discovery was useless for my purpose.

We were about to turn back, when one of the men drew my attention to something white wedged in the fork of rather a slight tree some fifteen feet from the ground, which proved to be the portion of a human skeleton picked clean by the crows. Now this is essentially a panther's trick, and a light panther at that, for the largest panthers very rarely take the remains of their "kills" up into a tree, probably for the same reason that tigers do not climb, their greater weight making the performance too risky for themselves, exactly in the way that it is more dangerous for a fat old man to climb a tree than it is for a lithe and active boy to do so.

Moreover, this tree would not have borne a large panther, much less a tigress, for it was far too slender. So there was no longer any doubt in my mind that the so-called man-eating tigress was something far worse, namely, a man-eating panther, who could climb like a squirrel which enabled it to get up trees, platforms, over the walls and through the roofs of houses, so that nowhere were the natives

safe from the clutches of this agile fiend, who—as a race—are much more daring than tigers, and think nothing of perambulating the deserted streets of a village at night, which a tiger practically never does.

A few days later, while passing through a village, a man came up to me and said that about a week previous, some animal had in the dead of night broken into his house and had carried off his wife—which raised a laugh against himself—for it provoked my reprobate old shikari to ask him whether it was a two-legged or a four-legged animal that had carried off his wife.

On being shown the house, I found it was situated almost in the middle of the village ; it seemed that the panther had come down the main street of the village at night, sprang on to the front portion of the roof, and having torn a hole through the thatching, sprang on to the woman below and killed her under the very nose of the cowering husband, who apparently made no effort to rescue her.

The woman being far too heavy a weight for such a light animal to take up through the hole in the roof, the panther set about scratching an egress through a bambu-matting door at the back of the house, and having succeeded in making a hole large enough to allow its body to pass through, it returned to the dead woman, seized her by the neck and then backed through the hole, dragging the corpse after it ; thereafter the trail lay through a small garden at the back, over a “ V ” shaped wicket in the hedge, down a back-street and into the jungle beyond, where the remains of the body were recovered on the next day.

Why the beast had not entered the house in the first instance by the back door, I cannot say ; perhaps it suspected a trap either here or at the wicket ; the latter was the only entrance to the garden, which was otherwise surrounded by a very high bambu fence, the wicket being of the shape mentioned, in order that, while admitting men, it would prevent cattle from getting into the garden.

However, it was all true enough, and I saw blood and hair from the woman's head still adhering to the sides of the hole and on the wicket—more being at the latter place where the panther evidently

had had some difficulty in getting its victim through, and must have eventually, with a supreme effort, sprung with its burden through the wider part at the top. However, the event was a week old, so it was too late for me to do anything then.

On my way back to camp, a field machan, at least twenty feet from the ground, was pointed out to me, from the top of which it was said the man-eater had made an abortive attempt to carry off a man at night.

The man who had been mauled on this occasion was still alive, though very ill, in a village near by, so I went to interview him in order to gather as much authentic information regarding the habits of this indefatigable fiend whom I was determined to outwit in some way or other, provided I was given time enough for it.

His story was as follows :—One evening he with six other men, making seven in all, sat together for greater safety on the said machan, keeping a small fire going during the night in an open earthenware pot, as they usually do on such occasions, from which they lit their “hookas” from time to time. Being packed together like sardines as they slept on the top of the narrow “machan,” he allowed one leg to hang over the side.

The night was a very dark one, and they were all asleep in this manner, when he suddenly felt something seize him by the calf of his leg and felt a heavy weight jerking it viciously, lacerating it frightfully. But he clung on to the “machan” with the strength of despair and shouted “*sher ! sher !*” and blue murder, until one of his companions with admirable presence of mind, emptied the contents of their fire-box on to the animal below, who thereupon immediately relinquished his hold and dropped to the ground. But a couple of hours later they again heard a noise of something scratching and clambering up the perpendicular ladder that led up to their retreat, but being this time on the look-out, they were successful in beating back the animal without any damage being done.

Several more such attempts were made during the remainder of the night, but as the men were now always on the look-out, each attempt was in turn repulsed. What a terrible time those

poor fellows must have had, unarmed as they were and in the dark being hunted by such a dreadful and persistent foe.

I did what I could for the poor fellow's leg, which was frightfully swollen ; but I am sure he pulled off all my bandages the moment I turned my back, and filled up the wounds, after the manner of their race, with slaked-lime, tobacco, cow-dung, etc. He refused to go to hospital, so I was not surprised to hear that he died from the effect of his mauling. The reader will now understand better the reason why I state that a man-eating panther is far more to be dreaded than a man-eating tiger, for the latter cannot climb, nor does it enter villages or tear its way into houses.

Reports continued to reach me from time to time of fresh depredations in various directions, usually five or six miles apart. However, I knew too much of the habits of man-eaters to go tailing off to the scene of every fresh human "kill" that I heard of, for the news of these casualties was always at least eight or ten hours' old, so that by the time I could reach the scene, I knew the man-eater would probably be some eight or ten miles away in some other direction ; so I adopted the policy of sticking to one locality, on the principle that the panther would sooner or later be certain to come round to it in the course of its circuit.

It was very trying time for all of us in camp, for none knew at what moment this lurking fiend might pounce upon and kill one of our number, especially at night, camped as we often were with dense jungle growth almost up to our tents.

At night large bonfires were therefore kept going all round the camp, which was also patrolled by armed orderlies. I found one of the latter one night asleep, when he should have been on the alert, so I sprang on to him with a roar, in imitation of the panther, and seizing him by the feet dragged him off into the jungle before he was fairly awake. I hardly bargained for what followed, for the man shouted blue murder and *sher ! sher !* and in a moment the whole camp was in hubbub ; the armed sentries at once commenced a lively fusilade at random in our direction, so that buck-shot and bullets were flying over our heads, and I had to pin the man down to the ground to prevent him getting up and being shot ; pinning him down made him yell the more, so it







was some time before I could get ourselves out of the tight fix that I unthinkingly got ourselves into. Strange to say, the man insisted in believing that I had come and *saved* him from the panther !

On 14th March 1889, while out surveying near village Chikly (taken from a note-book), I chanced to meet Mr. Herbert of the C.M.S. (whom I had the pleasure of meeting again after seventeen years, a few days ago at Mussoorie, 1906,) from Mandla, and as we knew each other, we had a chat and then passed on, each to his own duties.

That night, at 7 o'clock, I got a note from Mr. Herbert saying that, on arriving at his camp at Dadargaon, he heard that on the night previous the man-eater had killed and carried off a Gond from his field near by, and asked me to come and try to destroy the pest.

On reaching the scene next morning, I found that the Police had already removed and burnt the body, and had reported the man-eater to be a large tiger.

However, the villagers took me to the scene, a clearing in the jungle, which the victim had cultivated.

Within the field was his hut, made on the principle of a large open umbrella resting on its side, propped up by its handle. I was considerably surprised to find that the man had been so foolhardy as to sleep, under the circumstances, in a place like this, but an examination of the interior of the hut somewhat explained it, for here I found evidence of the man having been a bit of a hunter, for it contained a large kind of butterfly-net, a lantern with a tin reflector and bundle of resinous wood, which proved to me that the man was in the habit of spending his nights in catching hares by these means in his fields ; so, being accustomed to hunt alone at night in the jungles, he had probably acquired a contempt for wild animals.

In the young wheat to the left of the hut, the villagers pointed out to me the distinct " form " of some animal, which, however, was far too small for that of a tiger. Here the man-eater apparently lay watching its victim for an hour or more, probably waiting for the unfortunate to go soundly to sleep before it finally crept forward to

its bloody work, for in the young wheat were to be seen distinctly the marks made by the impatient switching of its tail during its grim vigil.

The victim was a large and heavy man, so it was easy to follow the ghastly trail—the grass, leaves and stones being covered with blood and hair, for the victim's jugular vein had been cut open and part of his scalp torn off.

The footmarks, however, were very indistinct, but after about 600 yards the trail led across the bed of a nalla, and here in the soft black mud I found indisputable proof—had more proof been needed—that the dreaded man-eater was not a tiger but a pantheress, and rather a small one at that.

Though I knew it was useless, to please the villagers I beat the surrounding jungles, with of course no result ; so, instructing them to send me prompt information if anything was again seen or heard of the panther, I returned to camp, and at once reported to the District Magistrate that I had proved that the man-eater, for which Government had offered a reward, was not a tiger but a panther, and requested him to have the notification altered accordingly. In this, however, the then D. S. Police did not agree with me, on the ground that his information clearly indicated the man-eater was a tiger.

In the meantime I continued looking after my works in different parts of the forests, and though I frequently heard many woeful tales of attacks made on villagers and on my subordinates, and of many narrow shaves, the panther never gave me a chance.

One day I found a poor old grey-headed man in tears. It seemed he was a traveller, and he and his only son a few days previously had put up at a certain village in these jungles, taking up their quarters for the night under a peepul tree right in the centre of the village.

Towards the morning the old man was disturbed by something, and thinking it was his pony he threw his arm out, which was instantly seized and bitten by some animal ; he jumped up and found his son gone—taken by the man-eater. The poor old father committed suicide soon afterwards.

On arriving one day at one of my former camps, I found that the man-eater had paid the village a visit while I had been away. A

young girl, about 16 years of age, had been extracted and carried off by the man-eater from a hut in a field. I found the hut a very strong one, made of bambus, the ends of which were embedded deep in the ground, the bambus being close together in a circle, with their top ends firmly lashed together, and further woven together strongly with "buccle" or fibre. The only entrance to it was a little doghole on one side, which had its door, through which passed a string connected to the rattles out in the field, which the inmates rattled from time to time to scare off wild animals. Nevertheless the panther forced its way in and abstracted the unfortunate girl.

This experience probably emboldened it to such an extent in entering such places that it finally led to its undoing, as will be seen later.

It was obvious that we ourselves had to be very careful. So I used to draw up my bed across the door of our tent, with a loaded gun and a supply of cartridges within reach, for the better protection of my wife and two little daughters within, while to our beds we also had tied six of our best dogs.

One night my wife sat up with a gasp and said, "Baby is gone!" What an awful sensation it was: for a moment, frozen with horror, we stared at each other with despairing faces, and the next moment were frantically searching the bedding, turning over the mattresses, but all to no purpose—the child was gone! Was the man-eater then really a supernatural ghoul, which the natives said it was? How then could it have entered our tent without our knowing it?

Tearing the two beds apart I looked below, and there on the floor I saw a bundle, within which lay our baby, sleeping peacefully with her thumb in her mouth; she had, unknown to any, slipped down between the two beds on to the floor.

We marched to another camp next morning, but on arrival found that none of our tents had been pitched, while in the village near by a great commotion was going on. We were told that during the night the man-eater had entered the Malguzar's house, but had been driven thence into a cow-shed and locked in and surrounded, and was there still. This was news indeed, so we hurried to the scene.

There was a large crowd round the cow-shed, each man trying to urge the other to go in and finish the *shaitan*, for fear it might escape.

To make a long story short, we found that the panther was *not* there, having escaped almost immediately by a hole in the roof at the back of the shed.

From this camp we moved on to another, where fifteen days previously a Gond had been killed by the man-eater in front of the very eyes of his wife.

On the road to this camp, however, I noticed the footprints of a pair of panthers, and would not have thought more of it, for there are hundreds of them about this part of the country, but for a certain familiar though disagreeable stench which met my nostrils every now and again along the road. I say familiar, because I had never forgotten the awful stench which was attached to the dung of pariah dogs during the great Mysore famine of 1876, when these dogs fed, and waxed fat and mangy, on nothing but the corpses of human beings.

Here I recognized the same smell which I soon traced to a heap of scratched-up earth and leaves, with which panthers, like all feline, cover up its dung. I then found several such places along this road, all quite fresh. I was greatly pleased, for this was proof to me that I had stumbled accidentally on to the fresh trail of the man-eater, and, what was more, she had a mate with her, who undoubtedly partook with her in man-eating, though it was doubtful whether he actually took a part in the man-killing. I thought not, for females are always the more daring and vindictive in such matters, and would probably not trust him to carry out such important business while she was by. This is supported in what followed to her undoing

To my joy, the fresh footmarks of these panthers led right up to the outskirts of the very village where our camp had been pitched. We were met by the Malguzar, the headman, who told us of the Gond having been killed here a fortnight before, since when the villagers had collected every night at his house, beating tom-toms and making weird noises all night long to keep off the *shaitan*, for none of them dared to sleep at their own houses. The wife of the

victim, a young woman of about 20 years of age, was brought up, and she told us all about the way in which her husband had been killed, quite enjoying the position of a heroine.

The villagers implored us to do something to rid them of the pest and wanted to get up a beat, when I told them that I had tracked the man-eaters to their village that very morning. This I refused to do, for I knew it would be useless and would only frighten the quarry away.

The fact that one of these panthers had invaded a house on the night previous at our former camp, showed that they were hungry ; and when man-eaters cannot get human diet, they will usually accept humbler fare. So I determined to resort to strategy, namely, to make and bait a cage with a spring-gun to its entrance. It is not a sportsmanlike way, I admit, but these fiends were far too cute for any other, and the circumstances justified any and every means which promised to be successful in destroying them.

I first made a thorough examination of the surroundings of the village, in particular the place where the Gond had been killed, and found the place surrounded by strong bambu fencings. I then examined all the roads leading from the jungle to the village, and at last found the place I wanted, namely, a cross-road, where two roads leading from the jungles met before entering the village.

Here I constructed a very strong pigstye with stout posts sunk deep into the ground, with a roof to it of similar material, made particularly strong, for I have known panthers to force their way through the roof of these traps, rather than enter by the doorway which they suspect.

When it was complete, I had the whole covered over some nine feet high with thorns, which were also similarly piled all around to a distance of about twelve feet, except of course in front of the door so as to prevent the panther fooling about, trying to get in at the sides or in at the top. The sides of the door too, of course, were heaped up with thorns, so that the whole concern looked exactly like a natural bush with a small black hole in it facing the cross-roads.

There was now nothing whatever about the trap to distinguish it from the surrounding jungles, so, satisfied with my work, I returned

to camp to await the sunset, when I would tie up inside the trap a juicy young porker, and having secured him, would then arrange the gun-trap at the entrance.

I gave strict orders that no cattle or villagers were to go into the jungles, and made the headman responsible that there should be no tom-toming at night, which, I hoped, hearing all quiet, would induce the panthers to prospect.

At sundown, I took master piggy and tied him inside the trap, upon which he squealed like a fiend, much to my satisfaction, for his frantic squeals must have been carried for a mile or more across the jungles on the still night air, which I knew would soon hurry down the panthers.

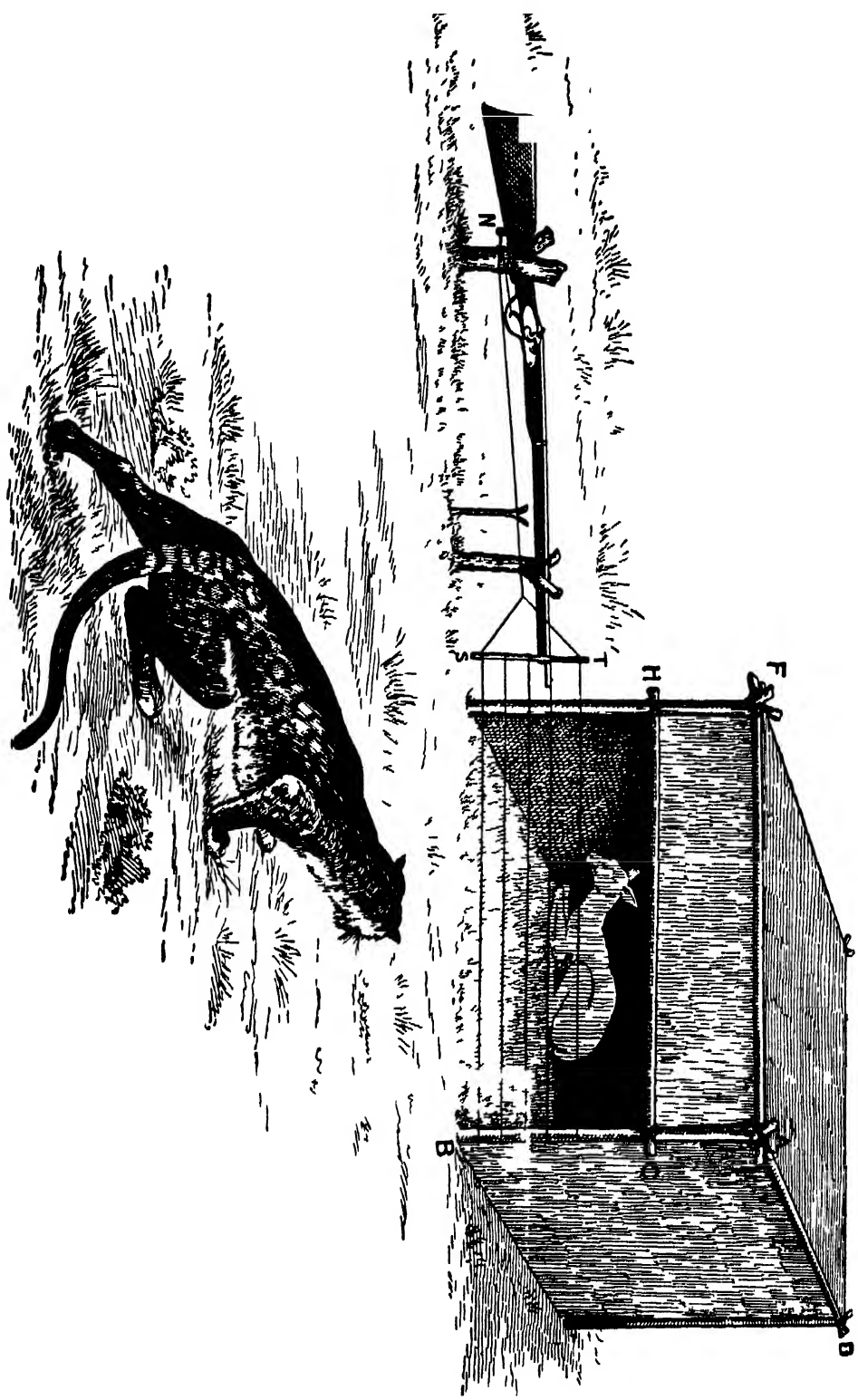
Having arranged the gun and the strings connected with the triggers across the open doorway of the trap we retired, talking loudly the whole way back to camp, so that if the panthers had been watching us near by, they would hear us going right away, leaving the field clear to them.

My wife and I then sat round our camp bonfire, as was our custom, with our dogs around us. When the dogs had been fed, our own dinner was announced, and we went in and sat down. We were just raising our first spoonful of soup to our mouth, when bang went the gun, about 600 yards from our camp.

All was commotion now ; dinner forgotten, torches—which had previously been got ready—were lit, rifles hastily loaded, orderlies armed themselves with spears, and the excited crowd, headed by myself, set out to learn whether at last the dreaded man-eater had met its fate.

On our way we were met by another eager crowd from the village, a weird motley crowd in that flickering torchlight, which played such tricks with the shadows before us, helped by the excited and strained state of our nerves, for we did not know at what moment we might have a wounded and enraged panther in the midst of us, striking out right and left.

At length the dark form of the trap came into sight on the outskirts of a semicircle of light thrown before us by our torches ; the little dark hole of the entrance also became visible, and the white dusty road in front of it, but nothing could be seen in front of the hole ; perhaps the animal had staggered off to one side wounded, so







it behoved us to be careful, and we commenced to pelt the surroundings with stones, with no other result than eliciting ear-splitting squeals from master piggy who now became aware of the presence of his human friends.

But surely that is something in front of the door, or is it only the unevenness in the road ? "*Bagh hai, sahib ; bagh hai*" —at once there was a panic-stricken rush backwards—"no, he is dead, *mar gaya*," said my orderly joyfully. And so it was dead ! The lithe light-coloured form of the dreaded fiend actually lay dead in front of the door and we had not at first seen it.

From the tracks we found next morning, the two panthers had come straight down the road to within about 150 yards of the trap, when they left the road together and entered the jungle. Then when within about 30 yards of the cage, the male sat down —apparently ordered to do so by his mate—while she proceeded to do what she had so often done before, namely, to force her way into the hut and drag out the victims. She did it once too often this time, for in forcing her way in at the narrow door she pressed against the strings attached to the triggers of the gun, which went off, shooting her right through the head, just behind the ear. It was a long, low beast, more like a tigress ; it was not mangy as man-eaters are supposed to be, though its coat was not good ; its teeth were mostly broken and its general condition poor ; in fact it was an old animal, which goes to support one of the theories for man-eating.

The villagers were simply intoxicated with delight, and danced and capered round me and my wife, calling down blessings on her head, a number of them prostrating themselves and embracing her feet, thanking her as their goddess who had come and saved them from the scourge of the terrible "Bhawani" who had devastated them for so long.

I anticipated that man-killing would now practically come to a stop, for though the male panther might after a time kill a few human beings now and again, when the craving for human flesh to which his mate had accustomed him came on him, the real culprit, as far as the actual killing was concerned, was the female.

Nor was I wrong, for no more human beings were killed for several months.

At last one day a report came in to the effect that an old woman, who had gone into the jungles to collect firewood, had been killed and carried off. A fortnight later, a cowherd was killed and partially eaten in the jungles.

Some local native shikaris, finding the remains of the man, screwed up courage and sat up with their guns in a tree at night over the remains. They had not the wily female to deal with this time. The male panther came, and they all fired at him together. There was a roar, but no panther remained, and they all sat huddled together the remainder of the night in mortal terror. Next morning, they found a fine male panther lying dead near by, but without a single gunshot mark on him. On skinning him, it was found that of the contents of the four barrels that were fired at him simultaneously, only one stray piece of old telegraph wire had pierced his ear and caused his death.

These men had excellent reason to be afraid, in view of one of the coups brought off by his late mate, which I forgot to relate. It was on a similar occasion, when some native shikaris sat up over the remains of a human kill; the survivors swore that when the panther was coming towards the kill, the corpse of the man raised its arm and pointed to the watchers in the tree—it is the old native superstition.

The probability is that the ghastly gruesomeness of the whole proceedings with this superstition ringing in their heads, got so much on their nerves in the stilly darkness, that they imagined they saw what they had probably more than half made up their minds—before they had been there very long—that they really were going to see. However, the fact remains that when the panther did turn up, they were so frozen with terror that none of them could stir a finger, while the panther calmly climbed their tree and dragged one of them with his gun out of the tree, and took him off without any of his three companions lifting a finger to help, though they all had guns. These men must have been fascinated or hypnotized—call it what you like—by their superstitious imaginings under the spell of their weird surroundings.





## CHAPTER XLIII.

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### WILD BUFFALOES HERDING WITH TAME.

Contrary to what is stated in some sporting books on the point, I have found that natives are very much averse to having wild buffaloes associating with their tame ones, for, apart from the wild bulls knocking to pieces and even killing their tame bulls, the progeny of the former, the natives tell me, although their mother is a tame buffalo, almost invariably run wild and go off to the jungles as soon as they are big enough to take care of themselves.

In the year 1869, in the Chanda District, a native came to me one day and begged me to shoot a wild bull-buffalo, because the monster had driven off the tame bulls and had taken possession of all the tame females, attacking any one who dared to come near them.

This was in the Alapalli forests, 89 miles from Chanda, where, but for one, I was said to be the first European who had ever come to these wild and primeval surroundings.

It was here for eight and nine months at a stretch that I passed my time among Marias and other aboriginal tribes, during which time I never once heard English spoken.

Well, the man was so persistent about the matter that I finally consented to sit up for the alleged monster at night, in a tree near the man's cow-shed, for he said the wild bull came to the shed every night.

In my inexperience I left all the arrangements to the man, with the result that in the evening I found that he had made my machan in the middle of a dense tamarind tree, where I would be enveloped in gloom the moment daylight departed.

However, it was too late then to alter the arrangements, for the man begged me to get up quickly, for otherwise we would be charged where we stood.

When I got up into my machan, the man tied one of his female buffaloes to a peg about 20 yards from my position, and then left me, fervently wishing me luck.

Hour after hour went by and nothing turned up, and what little moon there was, was about to set, when I knew I would be

left in intense darkness in which I would be unable to see even a large animal like a wild buffalo, for a dust haze obscured the stars.

The ceaseless "*chuckoo! chuckoo! chuckoo!*" of the night-hawk was lullabye which would have sent me to sleep, but for the torture of the mosquitoes and sand-flies.

It had got almost too dark to see, when I heard some heavy animal walking over the stones towards me, followed by *ongh! ongh!* which was at once answered in a similar manner by the captive buffalo below me.

Immediately a monstrous form of a wild bull loomed in sight, who walked boldly up to the female buffalo. I gave him both barrels simultaneously of my 12-bore rifle, pointed as far as I could judge behind his shoulder, for I could not see my rifle in the shade of the tree.

The shots, however, told, for they knocked him right over on to his side, where he lay struggling for a few moments on the ground, and then suddenly picking himself up with a bound, he thundered off into the jungle, followed up by two bullets from my spare gun, to help him along.

I heard him fall, groan, and pick himself up again, three times during the next three hundred yards or so. So I was fairly confident that he was done for.

When my men came up, we tore down some bambu fencing, and having made some torches in this manner, followed on the blood-trail, which was very copious.

We followed it for about half a mile, when it entered some dense grass, so we left him for the morning.

Starting very early in the morning, we again took up his trail. The beast had lost an enormous amount of blood and we came on a number of places where he had lain for hours.

We followed the whole of that day, coming up with him time after time, but always just too late for a shot, except on one occasion, when he made a blind charging rush past the whole lot of us, when he took me so much by surprise that I was only able to get one misplaced snap-shot as he passed by us.

The bleeding continued the whole of that day, so we were able to follow his tracks till nightfall, when we were obliged to give over

till the next day. We slept the night in the jungles where we were, making the best we could of the situation, which, to say the least of it, was very uncomfortable. But we were all too fatigued to worry much about the softness of our couch, or as to what we ate or drank.

Next morning we were off again at daybreak on the blood-trail, but as was to be expected, this had ceased during the night, the last being a mass of coagulated blood under a bush where he had apparently passed the night. We, however, kept on the track of the footprints of the animal until the evening, when we lost even these among the tracks of a large herd of wild buffaloes, which he had joined.

As this herd had split up into various directions, there was no telling which way the animal we were after had gone. We were all, moreover, dead beat after the privations we had undergone for two whole days without proper nourishment or rest, and were thoroughly sick of it. So we at last perforce gave up the chase, and returned to camp with a practical working knowledge of what a wild buffalo will sometimes stand.

In regard to the latter, however, it was my own fault, for I had loaded my rifle with shells. Had I loaded my rifle with solid spherical balls and fired them, as I did, the shells with six drams of powder, I have not the slightest doubt that that buffalo would have fallen dead within a few hundred yards.

I repassed this locality some months later, and was told by the villagers that they had again seen this old bull in their jungles, but that he had never again attempted to worry their tame buffaloes. They said that he was now a mere wreck with two festering wounds in his back that dropped maggots on the ground wherever he stood or lay down for any length of time.

I did my best to try and find him again in order to put the poor beast out of pain, but did not succeed in doing so.

My shells had apparently not penetrated far enough, and had so merely made a more or less superficial wound, thus condemning the unfortunate animal to a slow and terrible death.

Beware of shells for such game !



## CHAPTER XLIV.

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### DEATH OF GAREBIA GOND.

Dugger Forests, Wurdah, 1881.

Some sportsmen are most unlucky in the matter of fatal accidents from feline, etc., for it is nothing short of abominable bad luck to have no less than six men killed outright in one beat, and to have eleven men killed or wounded by a tiger in a single charge, which I have known to happen in the case of two unfortunate sportsmen on two occasions.

On the other hand, there are other more lucky sportsmen whose sporting careers have been singularly free, comparatively speaking of such accidents, though there is no doubt that such an immunity in their cases is largely due to the knowledge and care they have habitually exercised, in fact it could not have been otherwise.

Personally—if I may be forgiven the boast—I may claim to be classed among the lucky ones in this respect, for throughout my career of forty odd years' shooting in India, I have had only four fatal accidents to my men, whether shikaris, beaters or stops. Two of these I rescued almost from out of the jaws of the tiger, while the third case happened when a tigress (who had lately lost her cubs and had also been previously much harried by other sportsmen) charged back over my line of beaters, and the fourth case occurred when the beat was over and the beaters were returning to camp.

I know some sportsmen whose list of such accidents has run to considerably over double figures within a comparatively few years, for such little affairs have a habit of leaking out, no matter how reticent the unlucky sportsman may be on the subject. In such cases I have noticed that it is nearly always those sportsmen who are the exponents of the "noisy" system of beating; those who habitually use drums, rattles, etc., etc., in a beat when there is no necessity to do so, under the impression that the greater the noise the safer will the beaters be, whereas the very reverse is often the case (according to circumstances), for the more an inexperienced tiger is terrified in

this manner, the more likely he is under certain circumstances to be afraid to leave his cover and to sit tight in consequence, until the beaters are all around him, when in a panic at being obliged at last to escape through such a crowd of men who surround him, he simply has to clear a road for himself, perhaps killing half a dozen men in his rush to escape.

I am pointing all this out again here in order to emphasize the fallacy of the old-fashioned idea that an excessive amount of noise is a *sine qua non* on all occasions for the safety of the beaters. As a *general rule* the quieter the beat the more amenable will the tiger be and therefore less dangerous.

An excess of noise should only be resorted to as the lesser of two evils, when there is some peculiar and individual trait in the character of the tiger that warrants such a procedure—and such a tiger is always very risky to beat in any case—while, fortunately, there is perhaps not more than one tiger in every hundred that requires such a procedure.

Occasionally a tiger—more generally a tigress—is found, who, owing to past experience in the matter, makes it a principle to invariably break back over the beaters, knowing perfectly well what is to be expected should he or she go forward in the other direction. In such cases it is the choice of two evils, and the only way to prevent a catastrophe is to permit the free use of guns and bombs among the line of beaters and so perhaps inspire the tiger with a greater dread of the beaters than of what may be in front, when of course the tiger is then more likely to break through the line of stops with a rush than to go by the gun in a similar manner. Morally speaking, when a tiger is known to possess this character, or in the case of a tigress with cubs, or a wounded tiger, such tigers should not be beaten for at all, out of ordinary fairness for the beaters, and the sportsman should always make it his first duty to make himself thoroughly acquainted, by careful local enquiries, with all the idiosyncrasies of character in the tiger which he proposes to beat.

On the other hand, there are sometimes circumstances which justify the taking of risks in order to rid the country of a beast that has become a scourge to it. It is with one such an occasion that the following has to deal.

Shortly before my arrival in the district of Wurdah, one of the "Heaven-born"—as the men of the Indian Civil Service are commonly called out in India—expressed a desire to hunt the royal tiger in his lair, and an Inspector of Police forthwith made all the necessary arrangements for him in the Dugger forests, where there was a very large male tiger. The only result of this shoot was that the tiger escaped with a bad wound in his hind leg, which thereafter festered and got full of maggots (as I found when I killed him) which turned this hitherto mild and inoffensive old gentleman into a raging mad lunatic that flew at and tore in shreds every living thing that came within the range of his vision ; for by his behaviour there was little doubt that for a time this tiger went stark staring mad, and on one occasion he charged without any provocation through a hamlet in broad daylight—a thing which tigers never do—killing every living object that he came across. Consequently the whole countryside became demoralized with panic, for no one knew when or where the mad creature might not suddenly turn up and run amok ; and my forest works came to a dead stop. So I was now obliged to go out and see if I could not kill the beast.

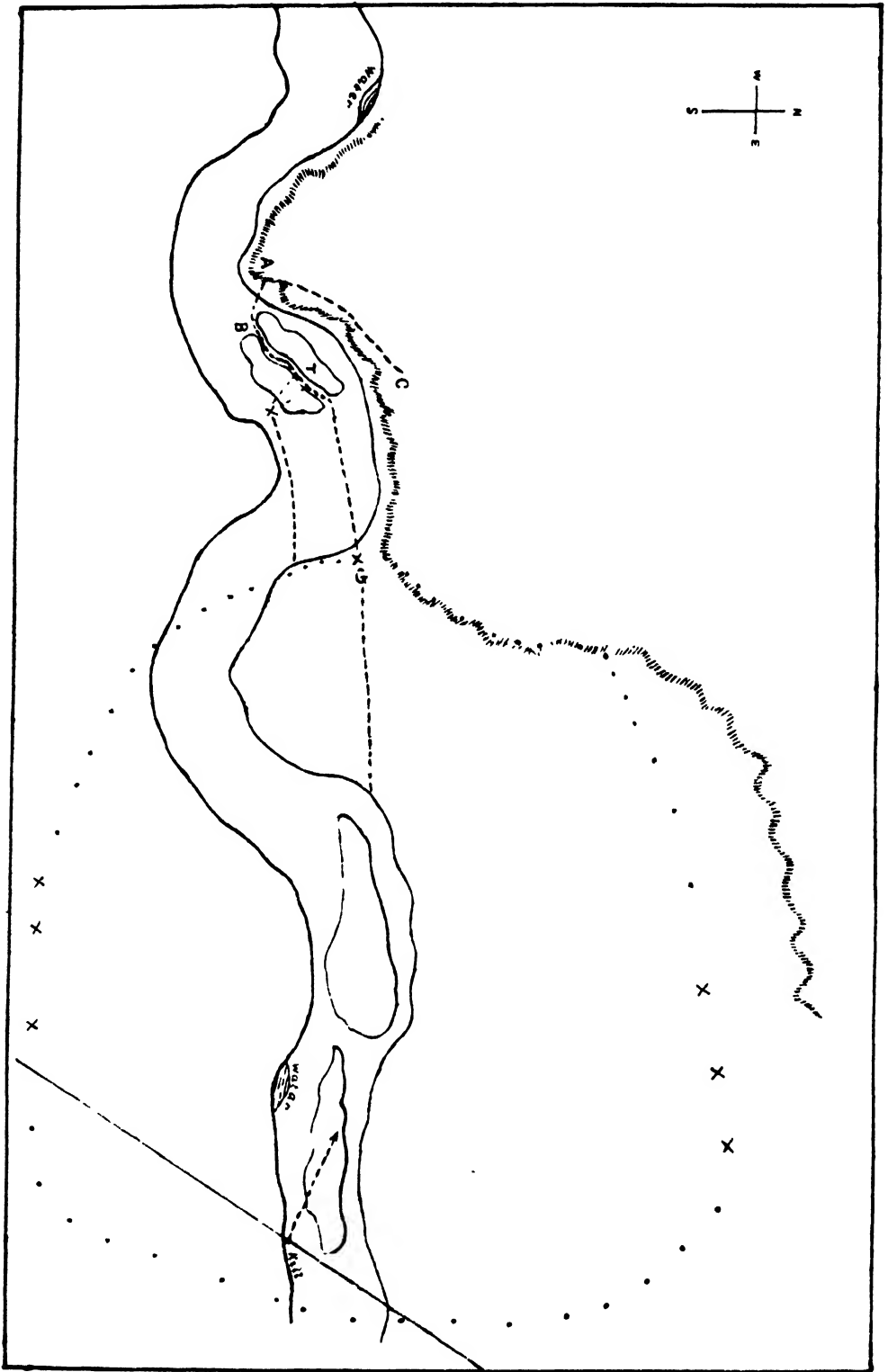
I arrived on the scene at the end of April, and at first had great difficulty in locating the beast, but succeeded in doing so at last in a tributary of the Wurdha River. Here I tied up buffs for him ; but his past experience in connection with these animals appeared to have made him suspicious, for we frequently found his footprints on the ground by the side of the buffs we had tied out for him, which he had refused to kill.

He did this so many times that I gave up collecting beaters for him overnight. But his wound had made it difficult for him to catch wild animals, so hunger at last drove him to kill and drag away one of my buffs.

This news took me unawares, so that on the spur of the moment it was only with the greatest difficulty that we were able to collect as many as sixty beaters, including a number of a stamp which, under ordinary circumstances, I would never have admitted.

On reaching the scene of the kill, I found that the tiger had dragged the body of the buff off into the direction of two densely covered





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islands in the bed of the river, where the evergreen jamun afforded a much better cover and shade than anywhere else in the neighbourhood for many miles around ; so I concluded that the tiger would be somewhere near by in the bed of the river.

So leaving the beaters on the footpath, I proceeded with the stops in a semi-circle to a spot on the further bank of the river, where a ridge of rising ground ran down at right angles to the river-bed and then continued along the bank to the west. This ridge joined the bank of the river at the end of a semi-circular bend in the river, across which, as is usual in such bends, was an animal track which re-entered the bed of the river at the point where the ridge met the bank. The combination of these two favourable features in the ground at once made it an ideal position at which to post the gun. I therefore selected a tree for my ladder at the point (G), and then put up the stops in person, along the ridge to my left and also to my right across the river-bed and along the further bank.

I had to be very careful in the selection of my own post on this occasion, for I knew I would only get a shot at the tiger at a racing speed as he galloped by me, for in view of his late character I had supplied all the beaters with a very large supply of bombs, crackers and fire-arms with strict orders for them all to stand still for at least twenty minutes, making all the noise with the means at their command before an advance was made. This delay in the advance, with its accompaniment of bombs, etc., I knew would give plenty of time for the tiger to conclude, that discretion was the better part of valour, while the path on which I was posted was the only one—in view of the natural features of this locality—along which he would of his own accord elect to come.

Matters turned out exactly as I had anticipated, for within half an hour of the opening of the beat, I saw my old friend roaring and galloping straight along the animal track in front of me. I had been expecting this for the past hour—which must be my excuse—for my nerves by this time were pretty highly strung. I failed to kill him, as I had made up my mind to do—my bullet striking him a couple of inches or so too far behind his heart—while my second bullet merely hit him in the stomach. The tiger spoke

to each shot, and passed on. But a man, whom I had placed on the top of the cliff behind me overlooking the bed of the river, called out that the tiger had gone into an island (T) in the bed of the river and had not come out on the further side.

I then placed men along the top of the cliff that overlooked this island in order to keep a sharp look-out. But while so engaged, one of the beaters by name of Garebia Gond, who—as we subsequently learnt—was stone deaf, continued along the bed of the river with the object of obtaining water at a pool that was situated further up the river. Being deaf, he had not heard my orders that no one was on any account to go forward. I did not see the man until he was almost opposite the island in which the wounded tiger was lying up. We all shouted at him frantically to go back, but—being stone deaf—he did not hear us. The next moment there was a roar, and the tiger darted out, and seizing the unfortunate man, bore him back in his mouth into the cover of the island, where all was immediately hidden from our view. All this took place so suddenly, that I did not have time to fire off a single shot.

I had not a moment to lose. So snatching my 12-bore gun from a man who was carrying it, I dashed along the top of the cliff till I came to a place where a descent was feasible (at A), and slid down in precipitous haste. Then running as hard as I could for the island, I entered a narrow gully (at B) which ran through its centre. I then steadied myself for a moment, and crept cautiously forward, the perspiration caused by the heat, and by the intense excitement, streaming down my face and half blinding me.

I knew my only chance of escape from being mauled, and perhaps being killed, lay in my movements being absolutely silent and on my being able to spot the tiger before he spotted me.

At such moments all sorts of trivial thoughts come up before one, and trivial things in one's path are noticed, such as a beetle on a leaf, regarding which for a moment you find yourself wondering where he came from and what he is going to do.

But the discomforts of a painful or cramped posture for the time being are not noticed, though I remember stopping every little







while to wipe the perspiration with my hand from my eyes, for everything now depended on having clear sight and hearing.

I pushed on thus quietly but quickly as I could, cautiously raising my head every few paces above the bank of my ditch in order to scan my surroundings.

After proceeding in this manner for about 150 yards, without having made a sound, fortunately for me, I suddenly caught sight of a huge old male tiger on a level with me, not 20 paces off on the left bank, with the man lying *between* his paws ; at the same moment the wretched man tried to get up, upon which the tiger, with his ponderous paw, just gave him a pat on the head and knocked him over again, and then both lay still. The tiger had his head pointed away from me looking towards the river, evidently looking out for another victim in the same direction.

Under these circumstances I knew it was essential that my shot should be instantaneously fatal, for otherwise he would instantly kill the man in front of him, even if he failed to reach me also.

Hitting him in the heart I knew did not always effect instant death, and that in his dying struggles he would probably kill the man before him ; so I determined to fire into his neck and break the vertebræ.

Drawing a long breath to steady myself, I aimed about six inches behind his jaw well into his neck, and fired—and to my delight the tiger simply dropped his head with a gurgling groan, a quiver passing through his body and he lay still—the blood rushing from his mouth and covering the wretched man who lay in front of him.

I then re-loaded and gave him another shot, this time into his heart, to make certain, and then approached him from behind (never approach an apparently dead tiger from the front), throwing stones at him as I went ; but he was stone dead.

To my surprise the wounded man sat up, but he was a ghastly sight : his scalp and part of his skull were gone, exposing the brain which could clearly be seen palpitating within the cavity ; one eye was torn right out, his jaw was broken and the tongue also torn, half out and hanging down.

The wretched man at once signed for water, so I called out to the men on the cliff that the tiger was dead and told them to bring my water-bottle to me as quickly as possible.

We then formed a funnel with leaves and managed to pour some water down the wretched man's throat, for he now had no tongue or jaw with which to swallow.

It was a terrible sight, but happily his agony was short, for he died within a quarter of an hour.

Altogether, this job was a thankless one for me. In the first place, a sad accident like this throws a shadow over the enjoyment of the whole trip, while of course for a long time I had the pleasure of paying out of my own pocket a monthly pension to the widow as well as providing a post for her son, and all this because I was quixotic enough to go and do the work of ridding the countryside of a wounded tiger in order to re-open Government works under my charge in this neighbourhood, though there were a large number of other tigers in the district to be had with half the trouble and risk. In other Services, an Officer who risks his life in the capture or death of a notorious dacoit or murderer receives some acknowledgment, or at least the thanks of Government. I have herein recounted in detail the perfectly true tale of my own experience, in order to show that in other Services also Officers can do real and substantially good work without any shape of acknowledgment whatever.

The details of all that I have recounted can be verified on the spot in the localities which I have named.

This story points to two morals: First, every sportsman who undertakes the responsibilities of pulling a trigger at a tiger should consider it his bounden duty, if the tiger gets away wounded, to do his utmost to kill it, for it is not fair to leave it in its wounded state to be a scourge to the inhabitants of the country and a danger to future sportsmen.

Secondly, sportsmen should see before starting a beat that they have none of the lame, deaf, blind or otherwise incapable among the beaters or stops who, as in this case, have every chance of coming to grief.



## HISTORY REPLAYING ITSELF



H W H

Enthusiastic small-bore (one shot each in the throat and one in the heart)



## CHAPTER XLV.

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### CLOSE QUARTERS WITH A WOUNDED TIGER.

#### Khanan River and Chindwara.

At my head-quarters at Chindwara, in April 1886, I was ordered by the Deputy Commissioner, Colonel Vertue, to try and destroy a family of man-eating tigers who were then devastating a large portion of the district near the borders of Seonee and Nagpur. I accordingly set out on the 20th April 1886, marching 26 miles that day to a place called Katamba on the road to Nagpur—according to my diary of that period. On passing some black-forest on the way, I took the opportunity to test a .450 Express rifle I had bought only a few days previously. It was such a well-balanced little weapon that I felt I could hit a florin piece almost every time at a hundred yards. Nor was I mistaken, for I was firing at an old buck who stood staring at me on the side of the road. My bullet struck him in the centre of his white chest, bringing him down stone dead on top of his nose where he stood.

After doing some other work to attend to on the west of the road in the neighbourhood of the Khanan River, I branched off in that direction a few days, before devoting myself to the man eaters.

## HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF



H W H

Enthusiastic of all three, one shot each in the throat and one in the heart.



## CHAPTER XLV.

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On the 21st I marched to Jobni (5 miles); on the 23rd marched to Paraspani, 7 miles, killed a bear on the way, and a neilgai in the evening, also had buffs tied out for a very old tiger on the Khanan River, of whom I had known for a long time; on the 24th beat out and killed the old tiger, though he might easily have killed me instead; marched to Dongar Jhila, 6 miles; 25th, marched to Sitapur, 9 miles, and spent the next five days after the man-eaters; terrible heat and hard work; shot the three man-eaters on the 30th, with one man killed. The above is a summary of my diary.

But this chapter is to deal with the Khanan River tiger. On the way to my camp at Paraspani, some rocks were pointed out to me, the rocks being overgrown with *chironji* bushes, which at this time of the year were in fruit, and the men said that a large bear had lately taken up his quarters in these rocks. So I sent a few men round to beat over it, while I stood on the spur at the end of the rising, waiting for whatever might come out.

Suddenly, there was a great commotion among the beaters, followed by an ursine *wouf ! wouf !* as a large male bear came tumbling along in comical haste about 80 yards off, but going along nevertheless at a great pace. I watched my opportunity as he was crossing a clear bit, and, aiming well ahead of him to allow for the pace, gently pressed the trigger, and over he went, head over heels, his impetus carrying him along performing several "cart-wheels" before he finally came to a halt on the broad of his back—stone dead, with his heart blown to bits by an explosive bullet.

That evening while in camp the villagers came and begged me to rid them of a bull-neilgai who, they said, had for some time past taken to systematically rushing at them and refused to be driven away from the crops, of which he used thus to take forcible possession and do a great deal of damage; one man more daring than the rest having been severely gored by him.

So I took my rifle and went with them, and found the old thief, as I had been told I would, grazing in solitary possession of a field. I was curious to see what he would do, so made the men hide in the grass while I advanced in his direction alone.

At first he took no notice of me whatever, and continued grazing until I reached within about a hundred yards of him.

Then for the first time he deigned to notice me, jerking his head suddenly up, giving me an impudent stare.

I was afraid that if I continued to advance, he might bolt, which might cheat me of the fun I expected to see ; so I halted, and then pretended to retreat.

This drew him at once, for down went his head as he charged for me. Had I continued to retreat I undoubtedly would have been hoisted, but as I halted instead and faced him, the bull suddenly pulled up all in a hurry, drawing back on his haunches in so doing ; and having recovered his dignity, stood pawing the ground and snorting apparently trying to frighten me into turning tail ; but as I stood my ground firmly, he seemed to come to the conclusion that he had better take time to consider the situation ; so holding both his tail and head high in the air, he trotted round in a semi-circle fuming and fretting in such a comical manner that I could not help laughing right out.

The sound of my laugh seemed to put the finishing touch to his resolutions, for he thereupon began to head for the jungle, passing by me broadside on about fifty yards off with his tail still in the air. Fearing I might lose him, I placed a bullet just behind the point of his left elbow, which brought him down in a heap never to move again. He proved to be a very old bull, almost white with age.

Thus I won the goodwill of the villagers, who were to help me on the following day, for I had sent buffs on ahead to be tied out for a veteran tiger who haunted the Khanan River at this point for many years !and had been sought after unsuccessfully by a constant succession of sportsmen from Kamptee and Nagpur for several years, for he had the reputation of being a very big one as well as very cunning.

Under the circumstances, I determined to be very careful and to see to everything myself—and lucky I did.

All admitted that there was no difficulty in getting the tiger to kill, but the complaint was that the tiger invariably fought against being driven, always breaking through the beaters or stops. To my mind it was clear that there was some definite reason for this, that had yet to be fathomed, and that it behoved me to fathom it before actually starting operations myself.

In the morning a kill was duly reported, and off we started for these seemingly ill-fated jungles.

The first thing I noticed was that a certain man of one of the neighbouring villages, whom I will denote as X, was most extremely officious and had, all unasked, apparently taken entire charge of all my arrangements, being very talkative of his knowledge of these jungles and of this tiger in particular.

On making enquiries, I learnt that this man was locally considered *the* man of the place, who always conducted all the arrangements for every sportsman that came, so what more natural therefore than that he should honour me in the same way.

This made me at once prick up my ears, for this might be a clue as to the frequent escapes of the tiger in the past ; so I determined to watch the man closely and to draw him out as much as possible.

On arriving at the spot where the kill had taken place, we found it in a lovely valley, full of jamun bushes and grass, lying between two cliffs, through the centre of which ran the Khanan River, now almost dry, except for pools here and there, but which at other seasons filled the valley from cliff to cliff with a rolling torrent.

The kill (K) had been taken off to the east on to the higher bed of the river-bed into very dense cover, and from the action of the vultures in that direction and the alarm calls of the peafowl, I knew that the tiger was by his kill, if not actually on it, at that very moment.

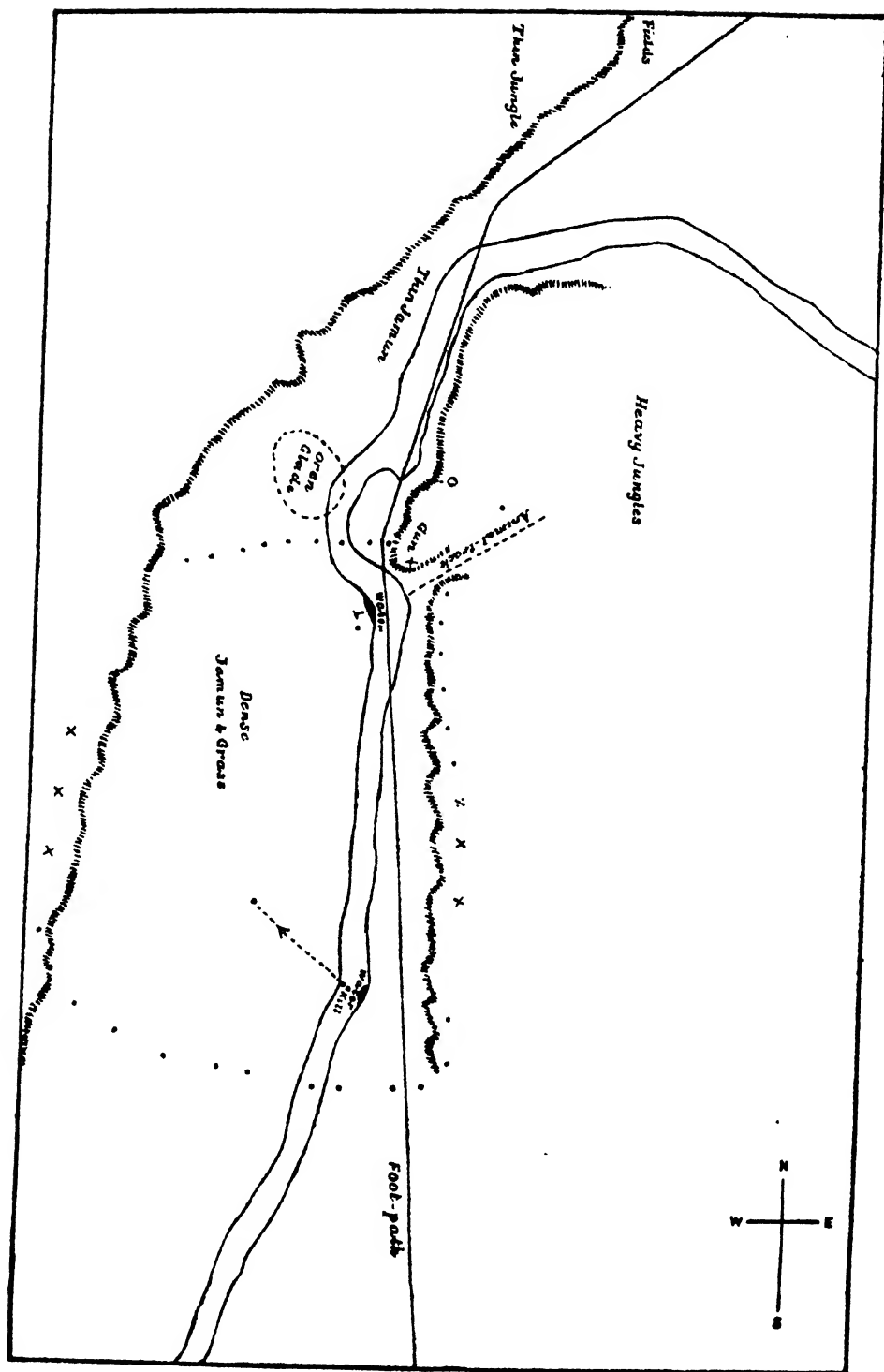
X at first suggested beating the valley from north to south, which I promptly vetoed, as it entailed beating over the kill.

I wished to draw the man out in order to make him show his hand as far as possible, when only perhaps I might be able to get the better of him.

He then suggested we should beat to the north, which I thought a better suggestion ; but when he wanted to proceed for this purpose straight up the river, I again refused, for this might disturb the tiger.

So we proceeded along the cliff on the east bank till we came to a point (H) where a footpath and an animal track joined and descended into the bed of the river, of which I promptly made a mental note. Crossing the river-bed, X. took us to a narrower portion of the





KHANAN RIVER.

valley (X) at which place he pointed out an open glade with a single tree in the centre of it, saying "this is the place in which all Sahibs sit when they come here for tiger-shooting, for it is a nice open spot where you will be able to see the tiger clearly when he comes."

I said that the place was undoubtedly an excellent one, but we would also go up on top of the western cliff and have a look.

On reaching the top I got rid of the shikari for a quarter of an hour by telling him to go with my orderly and look for tracks towards the west. When he had gone, I at once pulled out my map and held a hurried consultation with some local villagers and learnt that to the north there was nothing but open country and fields, to the south again open country or only thin jungles; that to the west there was no water whatever, and that the only possible direction that the tiger would willingly go was to the east, where there was not only heavy cover, but also plenty of water, for the river at this point bent this way.

I had now no more doubts in my mind that this man was preserving the tiger to serve as an ever-green bait with which to attract a constant flow of sportsmen, so I at once gave my instructions to my orderlies, and on his return at a sign from me, he was taken out of action.

By this time the animals in the valley were becoming agitated, which was a proof that the tiger was on the move, so it behoved us to hustle.

There was no time now to go back, so I at once took up my position on the animal track (at H) and sent two orderlies to rapidly place the stops out along the tops of the cliffs and to bring the beat up.

I did not bother to put up a machan, for my position was on the top of a cliff of about 60 feet high which commanded the river-bed below me and the animal track which led up from it to my left, for I knew the tiger would either cross the bend of the false bank of the river below me, or come straight up the animal track to my left. The only thing I was afraid might happen was that the tiger might try and force his way back through the beaters under the impression that as usual the animal track was "stopped" and that the beaters

were trying to force him across the gap before referred to and towards the open country.

I had a grand view of the whole river-bed below me for hundreds of yards, and in time saw the tiger coming quietly along through the jamun bushes in my direction, halting every now and then to look back in the direction of the beaters. But when he came to the east bank of the river proper, just opposite to the animal track where there was a pool of water (W<sub>2</sub>), I saw him suddenly crouch down behind the trunk of a fallen tree with his head towards the oncoming beaters.

I was afraid he meant mischief, but it was too early yet to say what he might or might not do eventually, so I waited and watched. The beaters came nearer and nearer, but the great brute never moved except to crouch closer to the ground with his tail twitching spasmodically every now and then. At last one of the beaters appeared within ten yards of him in front, and was about to advance on to the hidden fiend who was awaiting his approach. I saw the huge beast flatten his ears and gather his feet more under him and his body commenced to writhe and twitch with a slight side to side waving movement which indicated that he was about to spring on to the unfortunate man. There was no time to be lost, but I was over a hundred yards from the tiger, at which distance I could not be certain under the circumstances of killing the tiger dead in one shot, while if I only wounded him, I knew it would mean certain and instant death for the beater before him. So putting up the 150 yards' sight I took a fine sight at the base of the fallen log about a foot to one side of the tiger's head, and fired.

The result was entirely what I had wished, for the explosive bullet striking the log almost in front of the tiger's nose made him jump back with a *wouf!*, and forgetting all about the beater, he span round and came galloping in my direction, springing headlong into the pool of water which lay in his way.

I gave him a shot just as he was leaving the water, hitting him apparently somewhere in the back, for he spoke to the shot, but with his next bound he was out of sight in the grass.

I was expecting him to re-appear every moment below me, but for some ten minutes nothing appeared, so that I began to think my







shot had perhaps killed him and that he was lying in the grass below to my left front, where the cover was very thick, including the face of the cliff above it. I therefore moved along the top and commenced to throw down stones, but got no response. So I determined to go down and investigate in person, expecting I would find the tiger dead. The cliff here was almost perpendicular, so I unloaded my rifle preparatory to negotiating the descent, in case I might have a tumble. I had no sooner unloaded the rifle, however, when I heard a snort behind me, and on spinning round on one knee, in which position I happened to be at that moment, I saw over my left shoulder the wounded tiger glaring at me with anything but an amiable expression, only a few yards away.

Luckily for me he was at that moment too sick from his wound to charge me, or may be, he had had already two sharp lessons that day of the power of man and so thought twice about charging, being only a male, for I am certain a tigress would never have let me off at that moment. Howbeit while I was loading my rifle with frantic haste, he gave a bound and vanished into the tall grass behind me.

I had placed an orderly behind me, but he was too far north (at O) where I had placed him on top of the cliff to watch the river-bed behind me, in case the tiger passed by me that way, so though he heard the wounded tiger pass *behind* him, he did not see it.

Taking a jungle Gond with me to send up trees as I went, I followed on the blood-trail for about three hundred yards, when we suddenly pulled up sharp, for the tiger like the gentleman that he was, was good enough to intimate his presence to us by growling at us from a patch of *scindi* bushes or dwarf-palms, matted over with grass and brambles, where he had taken refuge.

Knowing the exact locality of his whereabouts was a great point in our favour, for all we had to do now was to circle round and round him until we could catch a glimpse of him in his lair, or until he charged ; it was pretty hairy work !

At last the plucky little Gond, who, though unarmed, was taking as much interest in securing the quarry as I did, suddenly gripped me by my shoulder and whispered "there he is !" pointing with his hand over a fallen log of a tree into the thick stuff beyond. But for the life of me I could not see him, though the tiger had evidently

become aware that the Gond had spotted him, for his hissing snarl was becoming louder each moment, which warned us that a charge was imminent. Suddenly I saw a movement, when I at once saw the whole form of the tiger quite clearly, which hitherto, though he had been there all the time, his coat harmonizing so perfectly with his surrounding, had remained invisible to me.

There he was with his body gathered up and, as it seemed to me, hidden behind his monstrous head, whose ears were flattened, lips drawn back and whiskers bristling, in an attitude of fear and hate combined.

It was the act of an instant to brain him from where I stood, on which the great brute dropped his head between his paws with blood gushing in a stream from his mouth.

On examining him we found that the reason he did not charge us was that his back had been jinked by my first shot which had also destroyed a part of his liver.

But for this lucky first shot I might, like the Irishman, have lost my life twice that day..





## CHAPTER XLVI.

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### THREE MAN-EATERS.

Shot at Lohangi, Chindwara.

In the last Chapter I gave the details from my diaries of my marches which took me to the village of Sitapar, which I reached on the 25th of April 1886, at the official request of the Deputy Commissioner of the District, in order to try and rid this neighbourhood of a family of three man-eaters who were then devastating the country along the Nagpur and Seoni borders, between the rivers Pench and Wurdah, their beat thus extending over a distance of about forty miles, one of their favourite resorts being in the neighbourhood of the little villages of Lohangi and Sitapar, near the high road between Chindwara and Nagpur.

The trait of being prodigious travellers, so common to all man-eaters, was evident in the case of these tigers also ; for after having killed and eaten a man in one place, they at once left it, and on the next day would suddenly appear at another place some twenty miles off, where they would repeat their offence.

Unlike man-eating panthers, they never intruded into human habitations ; on the other hand, scarcely a day passed, but some person was whipped off, either along the road while returning from the markets, or while returning from their fields, or while grazing or watering their cattle. All these occupations being daily necessities to those living in jungle areas, and as the tigers wandered over such a large extent of country, the latter could always be sure of a meal of their favourite repast.

All the roads and footpaths became unsafe, and very soon the jungles also became inaccessible to the villagers, who no longer dared to go into the forests to cut wood, grass, collect fruit, nor to graze their cattle. People whom necessity obliged to travel through these areas did so only in large parties. But some one man of the party had to be last man in the rear, and it was always he who fell a victim to the tigress (for of the three man-eaters, the old tigress alone was the *man-killer*) who, lying in wait behind some rock or

bush on the side of the path, and heedless of the shouts and efforts of his companions, would bound out and seize him, and then vanish again, taking the unfortunate man with her.

As Forest Officer of the District, I of course received daily reports from my subordinates of all that was going on in the forests, and from these reports it became evident to me that the whole country side in this direction was fast becoming demoralized by fear, and Government forest revenues were falling rapidly. One day it would be reported that while some coolies were employed on the Government works in forests, the tigress suddenly rushed out and carried off one of the men ; consequently the remaining workers either deserted or refused to re-enter the forests to carry on the work. Then followed another report to the effect that while some licensed herdsmen were grazing their cattle in the Government forests, the tigress seized one of the herdsmen, who, however, was rescued by his buffaloes ; but that, later in the day, the tigress made a second attack and this time succeeded in carrying off one of the men, in consequence of which all the herdsmen threw up their licenses and withdrew from the Government forests, which of course meant a loss of revenue.

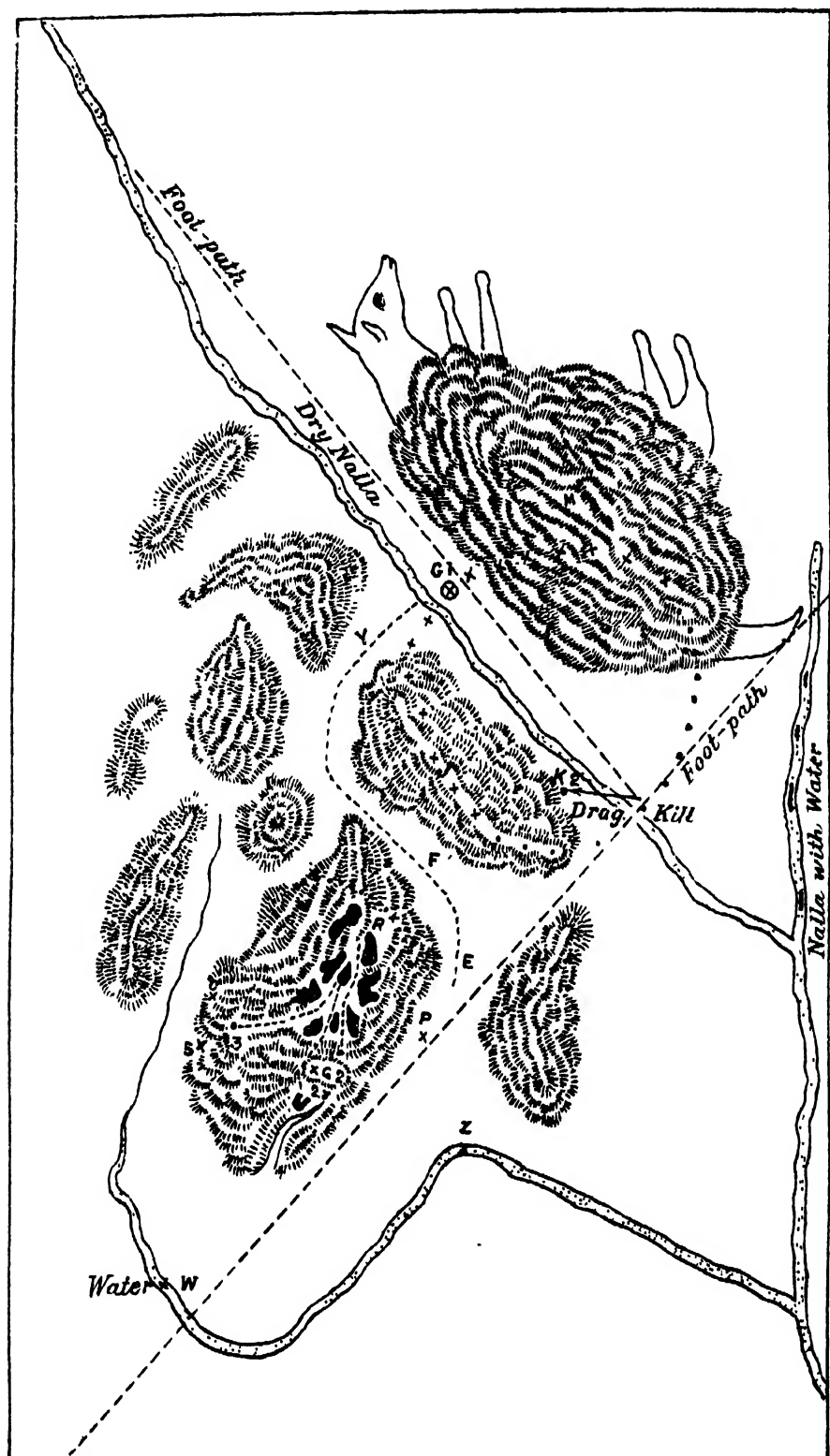
One of these reports was sent to me by one of my Rangers in English, from which it appeared that a couple of poor old village women, probably half-starved and in rags, had also been attacked by the tigress. This report was worded in the following quaint manner : " This day two ladies went into the jungle to pick up sticks ; when one lady had collected a bundle of sticks on her head, a roaring lion rushed out and carried her off, and the other lady climbed a tree and cried *hi ! hi !* until some gentlemen came and carried her off too."

Not only were my forest revenues going down on account of these man-eaters, but the villagers also took to setting fire to the forests in their vicinity, in the hope that by destroying the cover in this manner, they would force the tigers to leave their neighbourhood ; thus an incalculable amount of damage was being done by fires to the Government forests, which eventually compelled the authorities to take special measures to destroy these tigers.

In the meanwhile my own hands were in a manner tied, for on the rewards for these tigers being enhanced by Government and







LOHANGI

published in the Gazette, the forests in question were monopolized by relays of sportsmen from Kamti, Sitabaldi, and other stations.

But all their efforts to bring these tigers to book failed, chiefly because none of them would sit tight in one place to wait for the tigers to come round to them, but instead, kept running about all over the country from place to place, always to hear that the tigers they were after had just left and were killing people twenty miles away somewhere else.

At last, Colonel Vertue, the Deputy Commissioner of Chindwara, requested me to go out without further delay to try and rid the country of these pests.

Accordingly I arrived on the scene on the 25th of April 1886, my camp being at the little village of Sitapar, near the road to Nagpur, not far from the borders of my district. On my way to this camp I met a party of police constables who reported to me that on the evening previous the three man-eaters had kept them up in a tree for over an hour, walking up and down the road below, eyeing them like a cat would a sparrow.

My task was by no means an easy one, for these tigers by now had become considerably educated. However, having reached the spot selected by me, I determined to "sit tight" and wait for the tigers to come round to me, as I knew they would in time, for I was in their regular "run." But though I had made up my mind to stay in this one place for a whole month, if necessary, I got my chance and made the most of it, as will be seen, within five days.

My men being afraid to go out into these jungles alone, I had to tie out the buffs myself; and on the morning of the fifth day the tigers came down a footpath from the east, and finding one of my buffs (at K) had killed and dragged it off to the west into one of the few valleys that has escaped being burnt.

With reference to the sketch map herewith attached, I should here mention that nearly all the undergrowth of the jungles had been burnt; while the leaves of the higher trees having been shrivelled by the heat of the fire below, had fallen off after a few days, and now thickly carpeted the ground in every direction, thus making it very difficult, and often impossible, to do any tracking, for the first gust of wind, which at this time of the year is very

prevalent, would disarrange the leaves, and so completely obliterate all traces of any animal that might have passed over them. The only part that had escaped being burnt in this neighbourhood was the little valley (between the hills J and M), into which the kill had been dragged.

Beaters being in readiness, we were then soon on the spot, and taking up my position at the head of the valley (at G), the beat was brought up, according to my orders, very quietly, only the clicking of sticks being allowed, for I had grave doubts whether such very wary tigers would stay in such a trap as this, and might just as likely be in some other secluded haunt close by.

My suspicions proved true, for the beat was a blank one. So we proceeded to try and slog them down by tracking, which, for reasons already explained, was a task of the utmost difficulty.

After this for four hours we plodded along doggedly, in spite of the fearful heat, casting about for the trail, but without avail. But I refused to give in, and after having passed round through another gully (Y), we suddenly dropped on to the tracks of the tigers going down the bed of another valley (F); but we were able to track them only for a short distance (to E), losing them in the fallen leaves.

It was now between 1 and 2 P.M., and the heat was terrific; and as all our water had been exhausted, it became impossible to do anything further until we got some more, my own water-bottle having been emptied over my boots in order to relieve the pain caused to my feet in having to walk over almost red-hot rocks.

I had already sent off to camp for more water; but it was all looted on the way by the beaters, most of whom had by now deserted. So I and the few men that remained with me were now obliged to go and dig a hole in the bed of a nalla (Z), from which we managed to get some very dirty water but enough to quench our thirst.

We now again returned to our task, in the hope that we might find their tracks and trace them to some secluded spot, before they again took to wandering.

We were wandering about more or less aimlessly, when one of the local men remarked to me as he pointed to the top of a small hill (R) close by: "Sahib, on the top of that hill are some (basalt) rocks, in

which I have sometimes known tigers to lie up in the hot weather "Hearing this I immediately clapped him on the shoulder, and told him that he was an ass not to have told me this before, for under the circumstances this was exactly where the tigers must be.

On proceeding to the top of this hill, I found it to be a small plateau, piled up for some three hundred yards in length with a chaos of huge slabs of basalt rocks.

I then selected as my own post an isolated rock (G2) about six feet in height, and having only a few men left with me, I could afford only three stops, two of whom, a forest chaprasee and a local shikari armed with a muzzle-loading gun, I placed on my left (at C and S), while as a third stop I placed my pony on my right below the hill (at P), telling the syce to keep on shouting in order to prevent the tigers from breaking out in that direction. The remaining twelve men I then sent round to beat over the rocks to me. Immediately the beat commenced, I saw the head and shoulders of a large male tiger appear between two rocks (at point No. 1) some forty yards before me giving me a chest shot, and an explosive bullet from my .450 Express rifle caught him fairly in the centre of his throat, bringing him with a gurgle, in a heap on to his knees, never to move again.

While I was in the act of reloading my empty barrel, a tigress dashed out from another gap in the same rocks, and had almost passed my position before I could get my rifle on to her; and on firing I lost my balance and nearly fell off my rock, so that I was unable to fire my second barrel—though the first shot knocked her over—before she disappeared into a fissure in some rocks (T) behind me. Unfortunately I had as before used a shell, which, as I found afterwards, had exploded on her shoulder, and though the base of the bullet broke the shoulder and penetrated far enough to make her lie up, it was not enough to kill her.

In the meanwhile there was another roar further to my left, and I saw the third tiger striking across at full gallop towards one of the stops (S), so I emptied my remaining barrel into him instead and saw him go head over heels, over a rock—a very lucky shot which struck him in the heart and blew it to pieces.

By this time the beaters were close up, but on hearing my shots, they had all climbed on to trees. I called out and explained to them that two tigers were lying somewhere in front of me either dead or wounded, and that another tiger was lying wounded behind me and gave strict orders that no one was to get down from their trees until they again received, orders from me.

While my attention was occupied in this manner with the beaters in front, the shikari and the chaprasee, whom I had placed in trees to act as stops on my left, got down from their trees unknown to me, and must needs go and poke their heads into the rocks in my rear, where they had seen the tigress fall over, as they thought, dead.

The first intimation I had that anything was going wrong behind me was a roar and a scream from one of the men, and I then saw the tigress with the head of the chaprasee in her mouth, shaking him like a rat. I could not fire at her, as the man was in the way, so I did the next best thing under the circumstances. I fired at the rock by the side of her head, so the splinters from the bullet struck her on the body further back, which had the desired effect of making her drop the man to turn round and see what had struck her apparently from behind ; she then withdrew into the fissure, leaving the man prone on the ground in front of the opening.

The unfortunate man then tried to get up, but fell down again on all fours, and then fainted. So my first and immediate duty was to rescue him from a second attack.

Running round to the east side so as to be out of the line of sight from the mouth of the fissure, where I was immediately joined by the game little shikari, we crept silently and quickly to the spot where the wounded man lay, and while I stood on guard with my fingers on the triggers of my rifle, my companion dragged the wounded man literally between my legs expecting the tigress, who was growling at us scarcely five feet away, to spring out on us at any moment. However, the shikari managed to carry off the wounded man, while I slowly backed away from the dangerous quarter until we were fairly safe. Then placing another man up a tree to watch the tigress, we turned our attention to the wounds of the unfortunate man.

I saw from the first that his case was hopeless, for a canine-tooth of the tigress (she had only one) had pierced deep into his skull, and





the wonder was that he was still alive. We did what we could for him on the spot, and then started him off at once for the nearest Government dispensary, which was about five miles away at Sausar. He died on the way.

I then proceeded to take change out of my lady, who, the man on the watch in the tree told me, had not yet moved out of the rocks. I noticed that behind her position there ran a small gully, the bank of which at one point (H) appeared to overlook the fissure in which the tigress was lying. So I immediately worked round to this spot, and climbing up the bank, found exactly what I had hoped for—a clear view of the vicious beast as she lay flat between the two rocks with her head pointed away from me, in the direction where she had seized the man, evidently expecting another victim to appear in the same quarter—with her tail switching about from side to side, showing that she was full of life and mischief still.

But the chaprasee was to be the last of her long list of human victims, for I gave her her quietus from where I stood, upon which she merely dropped her head, a tremor passed through her body, and the dreaded man-killer of Lohangi was no more.

The other two tigers were stone dead on the spot where I had seen them last; both were males, one old and one young, no doubt father and son, the tigress being the mother of the latter, thus confirming what I had previously heard regarding this trio of beauties.

The sad accident greatly took away from my pleasure in having at last circumvented and killed these three man-eaters. But their final destruction was worth the sacrifice of even one extra human life, for, had they continued to live, they would undoubtedly have caused the loss of many scores more.

I pensioned the wife of the man who was killed—though his death was owing to no fault of mine—for he had acted without my knowledge and against my orders in getting down from his tree before the beat was over.

Before leaving the scene I sat down and wrote out on a piece of brown paper, which one of my men happened to have with him, an account of all that had just taken place, and sent it to my brother, Canon H. S. Hicks, at Tynemouth, who sent it on to the English "Field," which published it about July or August 1886.



Had I been using a larger bore rifle, or even a solid bullet, instead of only a .450-bore with a hollow bullet, there would have been no accident on this occasion. This was the first of a series of ineffective, though very accurate, shooting into which I was led by this little weapon; its great accuracy and handiness was a regular fascination to me, so that for many years I could not bring myself to part with it; the result was that, with the temptation to use it being constantly before me, I was led by it into perpetrating many mulls, leading me into a number of scrapes, and finally into a terrible mauling for myself. So let all sportsmen beware of the deadly "fascinations" of small bore rifles.

It may be a surprise to some to hear that I got hauled over the coals by Government in regard to the above affair, and was called upon to "explain" how it was that I had employed a Government servant (the man who was killed) while I was beating for tigers.

To this, after explaining all the circumstances attending these man-eaters, I pointed out that I had been officially requested by the District Magistrate to kill these tigers, and that in having complied, I had acted not only in the interest of the public, but also on behalf of Government as a Government officer. Moreover, that had my subordinate not accompanied me while I was in his beat, I would have punished him for insubordination, and the fact that he was killed was due to his own foolishness and deliberate disobedience of my orders.

Nor was this an isolated case, for I have on many other occasions also been officially ordered out specially to kill tigers that become a scourge to the district. It might surprise the reader to learn also that as late as the year 1906, Government was obliged to depute a special Forest Officer for the sole purpose of killing off man-eating tigers in the Mandla District, placing elephants at his disposal, which was not done in my case.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

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### TIGER-CHARGE OVERHEAD.

#### Bhua-Bichua.

It was in the winter of 1889, when on my way to being mauled by a tigress, that the following incident took place, which ought to have served, but did not, as a warning to me.

I was camped at a delightful spot under an enormous old burr tree at a place called Bhua-Bichua, in the Mandla District, not far from the place where the Halon river crosses the road from Mandla to Bilaspur. Bhua and Bichua being two small villages, one on either side of a little nalla that ran into the Halon.

A few miles further on, along the same road to Bilaspur, is the famous evergreen Sal valley known as Moti-nalla of South Phen, which in my time at any rate was a paradise for sportsmen, containing a large variety of game, including bison, buffalo, swamp-deer or barasingha and cheetle, and samber and tigers galore. But the wild buffaloes here were very few in number, so I never shot them, and strictly preserved them against all-comers as long as I was stationed in the district ; there were only eleven of them all told, of which only one was a matured bull, the remainder being all cows and calves. After I left the district, a party (I cannot call them sportsmen) arrived in this neighbourhood and slaughtered nine of these eleven animals — leaving only the bull and one calf.

A few miles further east, just over the intervening watershed, is Khana-Khasli and the Banjar Valley, which is full of barasingha and also has a few bison and buffalo.

West of Moti-nalla is a high tableland, more or less open which *was* full of game, especially black-buck and neilgai, among whom I had great fun with my dogs. Game here were so tame that it was tame work shooting them, for they were quite unacquainted with the nature of fire-arms ; for, strange to say, there were no native shikaris about and European sportsmen very rarely ever came so far afield.

However, on the present occasion, the scene of my operations lay on the Halon river, a few miles only from my camp, where there were always several tigers to be had, and were comparatively easy to get, though I sent an acquaintance out to the spot some years later, who returned empty-handed, saying that though he found the tigers, he had been unable to get them out, which was simply because he did not know the proper way to manage it.

On receiving news of a kill, I proceeded to the spot and found that the kill had taken place in the bed of the river (K), and the carcase of the buff had been dragged towards the east for over half a mile, round the base of a hill running along the bank of the river, and into a valley beyond, where it was deposited (at T) under the same hill on the further side. This side of the hill faced the east and so obtained the full effects of the morning sun, and as this was a cold winter morning, with all the jungles sodden with dew, it was pretty obvious that the tiger was probably lying somewhere on the southern slopes of this hill sunning himself, probably just above his kill.

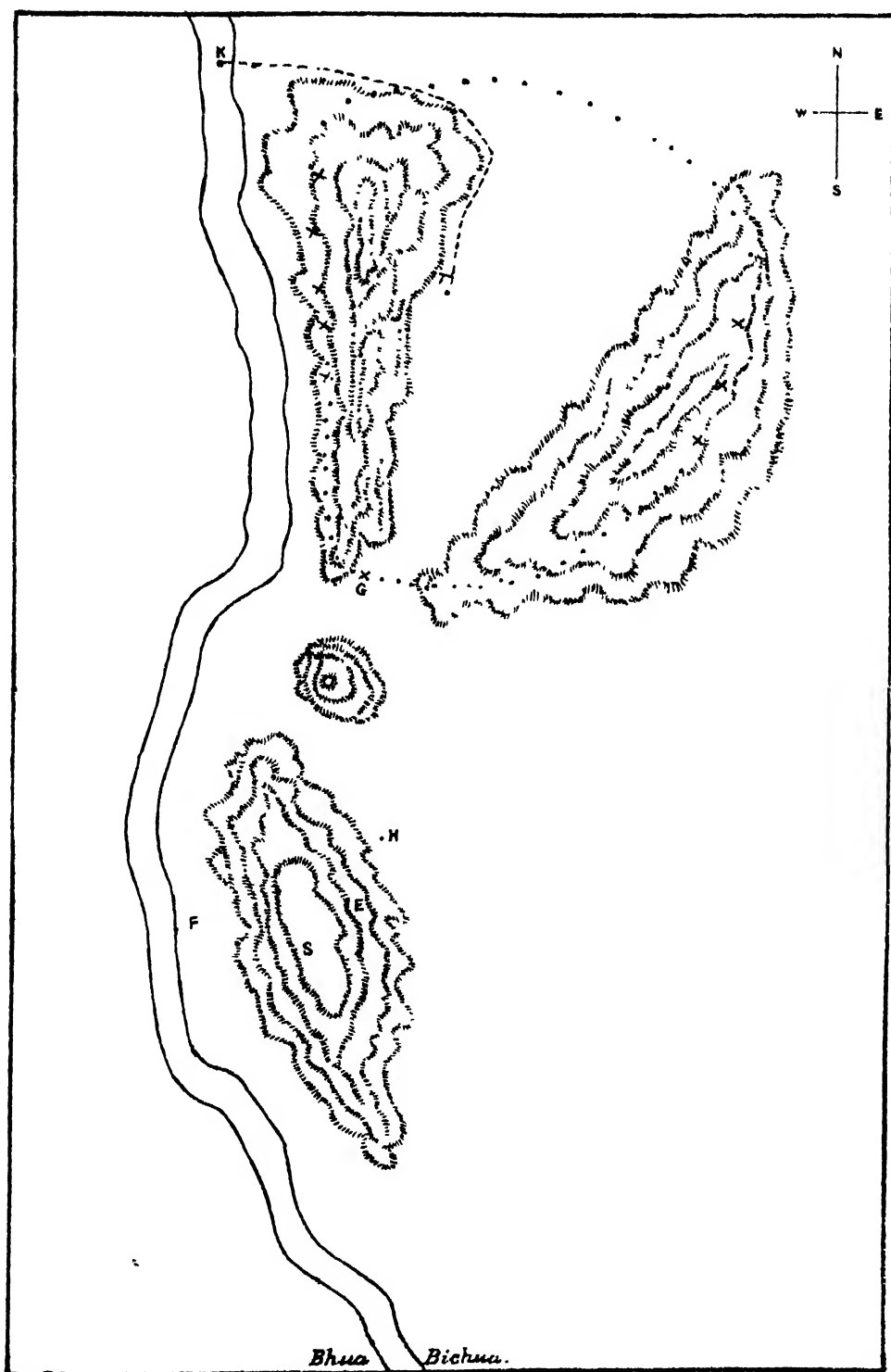
It was now a simple matter to beat him out, for all I had to do was to run my stops along two hills on either side, and to sit myself at the narrow mouth of the valley (at G).

This I did, but foolishly used my .450 Express rifle, though I took the precaution of putting in solid soft-lead bullets.

But the tiger came out rather faster than I had intended, so that I could not pick my shot. The elongated bullet struck the beast on the shoulder, but on meeting with a large bone, it got deflected, and thereafter ran merely round the ribs of the tiger, and then into his stomach. And before I could get in a second shot, the tiger disappeared into some grass.

I had previously placed a man to keep a look-out from a small conical hill (O) in my rear, and I soon heard this man calling out that the tiger had passed him, and had gone on to a larger hill behind (S).

The intervening jungle being fairly open, I immediately ran forward in that direction, being joined on the way by the man who had called out to me. Hurrying on to the base of the hill, we suddenly caught sight of the tiger walking along the top of one of



BHUA BICHUA.







the spurs. It was a longish shot, some 200 yards ; so I sat down, and having raised the sight of my rifle, took a steady shot at the tiger, and had the satisfaction of seeing him come tumbling down the hillside, until he fetched up against a Sali tree, where he recovered himself and remained leaning against the trunk of the tree for a moment. My second shot, I am afraid, was too hurried, for the only effect it had was to make the tiger give a bound forward, which carried him out of sight.

I then had the whole hill surrounded by men up trees, and then proceeded to negotiate the matter in person. It would not do to go straight up the hill after the wounded beast, for he would certainly be on the look-out for me in that direction. So I went round to the further side of the hill along the river bank, and from that direction (F) proceeded to climb to the top, expecting to find the tiger (as I have on other similar occasions) on the further side looking downwards.

I took only one man with me to carry my rifle, which I had now rejected for my smooth-bore, for I anticipated having to stop a charge, which I consider can only be done with any approach to certainty or regularity, by a large striking surfaced bullet, provided the aim be anything like decent.

On the top of the hill I found a small plateau, and was about to cross it, when to my surprise the tiger, whom I was expecting to be on the further side of the hill, suddenly sprang into the open before us, and commenced to advance at a crouching trot towards us, with his ears laid back and growling, evidently meaning business.

There was no time to be lost, for he was scarcely forty yards away. So I took a hurried snap-shot at him (a very bad shot, which only gave him a slight flesh wound on his foreleg) and the next moment the air seemed filled with a chaos of hurling sticks, stones, teeth and claws, as a huge tawny mass launched itself into the air in my direction with an air-shaking roar. I had merely time to fling myself down sideways under a small rock and jerking the muzzle of my gun into the air, I fired as the mass passed over my head. Providence guided my bullet on this occasion, for it caught the beast in the roof of his open mouth, and blew out the top of his head.



On turning round, I saw the tiger had performed a complete summersault, for he was lying stone dead with his head pointed towards me, that is, opposite to the direction of his spring. Under him was lying the cloth which he had torn from the back of the man behind me, as he was in the act of bolting, so it was as near a shave for the man as it had been for me.

I have seen it stated that tigers never spring into the air with all four feet off the ground at the same time. But I can vouch that this tiger flew straight over my head exactly in the manner shown in the accompanying illustration. He probably aimed at my throat, and my sudden action in ducking down, caused him to go over me in this manner. On one occasion I measured the length of a tiger's spring with a tape-measure at a spot where he sprang across a nalla, and found that he had cleared 24 feet in one bound without touching the intervening ground. Unless he had all four feet off the ground at the same time, I fail to see how he did this, for he was certainly not 24 feet in length himself. Also, I have repeatedly seen tigers vault without any apparent effort at a single spring on to the top of perpendicular banks eight, ten, and even twelve feet in height. When a tiger stands up on his hind-legs against a tree he could reach with his forepaws to a height of some twelve or thirteen feet, so that it is not unreasonable to conclude that, if they chose, they could with a spring reach some six or eight feet higher than this, namely, to about 20 feet. The reason why they do not spring at a man seated at that height in a tree is because they are probably under the impression that that monkey-like being would either slip round, or higher up still, before they could reach him.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

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### THE POT THAT WENT TO THE WELL ONCE TOO OFTEN.

In the year 1889 I was stationed in the Mandla District, where I was deputed for the purpose of demarcating certain areas of forests, into which the Government had finally determined to confine a local aboriginal tribe known as Baigers, for it was the habit of these simple people from time immemorial to live chiefly by "dyah" or the simple process of burning each year a certain area of forests and sowing in the ashes of the burnt area their crops of millet, etc., changing their scene of operations each year and thereby doing great damage to the forests. It was for the purpose of demarcating and reserving certain areas of forests, within which these people were to be allowed to work their sweet will, that I was now deputed.

These forests covered an area of thousands of square miles and were full of all kinds of game, and consequently contained a very large number of tigers, of which I soon had no less than forty marked down. So it came about that I made a boast that I would shoot at least twenty tigers in the cold weather season of 1889-1890.

However, I was not able to take the tigers in hand until the Christmas holidays, that is, from 24th December 1889. Nevertheless by the 6th of January 1890 I had bagged six tigers, so that I was in a fair way of fulfilling my boast.

But I should mention that in two of these six cases I had to follow up the wounded tigers on foot (which, with good management and shooting, would be about the average), and in both cases I had very narrow escapes, in one case the tiger jumping over my head (at Bhua-Bichua). These escapes made me reckless, with the inevitable result, as will be seen by what occurred on the next day, the 7th of January. I was camped at the time at Moti, not far from the source of the river Nerbudda at Armakantak, in the north-east corner of the Mandla District.

On our arrival at camp, our servants informed us that they had found the fresh footprints of a tigress at the pool near by, from which water was obtained for the camp. On further enquiry I learnt

that this tigress had of late been making itself very obnoxious to the local villages, having killed several of their cattle and even frequently challenged the villagers themselves on the roads.

I therefore had buffs tied out for her, but as luck would have it, on the same evening she killed two of the village cattle in a bad place for beating, so that night none of my buffs were killed and we therefore had to make the best of her other kills.

I had a number of Baigers collected as beaters, and on examining the kills I found that there was no water within miles of them. However, I had a quiet beat in the neighbourhood, on the off chance of her being near by, but with no result.

There were heavy grass and timber jungles on every side, so there was no question of tracking her. Therefore the only consideration that offered a hope of locating her was the position of the nearest water, and this, on enquiry, I learnt was no less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles away. So it was with very small hope of success that we started off to beat for her in the neighbourhood of this water. Here a word concerning the Baigers. I cannot agree with all that some sporting books say of this aboriginal people concerning their sporting qualities. They are good trackers, and can climb trees like monkeys, but that is about all that can be said for them.

On arriving at our objective, we were, however, rewarded by finding the fresh footprints of the tigress in the sand of the river which contained the water. I had not much to go on, but I lined out the stops and sent the beaters round to bring up the beat, while I myself took a position on my ladder near the bank of the river, with the water behind me.

The tigress was evidently a very shy and cunning beast, for the moment the beat started she appeared at a gallop, giving me an awkward right-hand shot, so that I had to shift round on my ladder in order to manage to get a shot at her.

I was shooting with my .450 Express rifle, a very accurate—though how I wished afterwards it had been a larger bore—and succeeded in getting in one barrel, to which she spoke and tumbled over. But recovering herself immediately she plunged into the water behind me and rushed across to the opposite bank, where she disappeared into the cover, before I could get another shot. However,



Author Mauled

SEE FIFTY FIFTY OF A MIND ME

W.P.



I felt certain that my shot had been a crippling one and that she would not go far ; so when the beaters came up, I at once sent some of them to camp to fetch up my dogs. In the meanwhile I sat and smoked and weighed my chances. But the more I considered the matter the more convinced I became that she must be dead within, perhaps, a couple of hundred yards, and that I was making a fuss and delaying needlessly. The only reason that I delayed at all was that I had promised my wife, after my last adventure, that I would follow up no more wounded tigers on foot without dogs or buffs. But now in my impatience I persuaded myself that the present was not a case of following a wounded tiger, but the picking up of a dead one lying dead, "just beyond that bush !" Thus did I break my promise, did follow, and was punished for it. Giving my spare gun loaded to my orderly, an ex-constable, I took up the blood-trail, which was copious, just as if the blood had been poured out of a jug.

I pushed on slowly and quietly across the river-bed, through a lot of dense grass (a foolish act), and on to the top of the bank above, which I found covered with a lot of stunted palm bushes called by the natives *cheen*. The fronds of these dwarf palms hung over touching the ground, so as to form regular kind of dog-kennels.

I was poking about in among these, when suddenly there was a rush from under one of these kennels, and a terrific roar, and I was conscious that the wounded tigress was in mid-air, coming straight at my head. I had only time to throw up my rifle and pull both barrels simultaneously into her chest, when I was knocked flat on the ground with the tigress on top of me. My shot, however, had for the moment knocked her senseless ; and as soon as I realized this I shook myself free of her weight and jumped to my feet and tried to reload my empty rifle. But alas ! my pockets had been ripped open by the claws of the tigress and were lying, unknown to me, on the grass at my feet, and before I discovered the fact, the tigress recovered her senses and rose to her feet. I had no time to pick up even one of the precious cartridges, which were so near and yet so far, for she at once reared herself up against me with a fierce gurgling snarl, while I ground my heel into the ground and for just a moment held her off by her throat, while I frantically searched

with the other hand the corners of my pocket in the despairing hope of perhaps finding in them just one cartridge ; but the next moment I was down with the terrible brute on top of me.

What happened after that, I am not quite certain ; for far from feeling the painless and placid contentment recorded by some other sportsmen under similar circumstances, I never felt more in a rage in my life, and had I had even a knife in my hand I would have ripped her from end to end. As it was I could only beat her with my fists as she seized me by my hip and shook me like a terrier would a rat. Suddenly she dropped my hip, and seized my left hand in her mouth and commenced chewing it up. Then everything seemed to go round and round, and the last thing that I remember is the tigress with her head raised in a listening attitude with a far-away look in her eyes, with the tendon of my wrist hanging hooked on to her eye-tooth, jerking it from time to time and sending excruciating shocks of pain up my arm—and then blank !

How long I lay like that I do not know ; it may have been only a few minutes, or it may have been an hour. But when I came to, my first sensation was that of being suffocated by some heavy weight on top of me, which I found to be the dead body of the tigress which was lying partially across my body.

My left hand was a pulp of raw flesh and broken or crushed bones ; my coat and trousers were in shreds ; a portion of my left hip had been torn out by the tiger's jaws ; my leggings were torn off by the claws of the tiger, which had also deeply lacerated my legs, besides some, fortunately minor, scratches on the stomach. There was not a single human being within sight. My boots were full of blood ; in fact I was covered with blood from head to foot, mostly my own and partly that of the tiger. In this state I dragged myself to the water in the river, in which I wallowed and tried to wash out all my wounds in order to try and get rid of as much of the poison as possible. I may have again fainted here ; I do not quite recollect, for the whole of that time seems like a far-away dream.

At any rate I remember I finally made an attempt to bind some of my wounds with portions of my shirt in order to staunch the flow of blood, for I feared I might bleed to death before I could reach help. I then started to totter as best I could towards camp, which lay

over three miles away. I believe some of my men joined me on my way, two of whom then supported me, one on each side as I walked. It seems that when the tigress attacked me, all the men bolted, most of them straight to camp, where the orderly was the first to arrive and inform my wife that I had been killed. That brave woman at once snatched the still loaded gun from the orderly's hands, and telling the men to follow her, started off to my rescue. Apparently my conscience pricked me, for I am told, that when I saw my wife on the way coming towards me through the jungles, I at once made my supporters stand off, while I lit a cigar and putting my left hand behind my back, met her jauntily whistling a tune as if nothing had happened, though my boots, by squelching with blood, gave the show away rather.

That night, I remember, I insisted on joining the others at dinner ; and after dinner, called up my *munshee*, and did my office work as usual.

But my temperature began to rise rapidly, so realizing that I was probably in for a prolonged bad time, I sent for the whole of my working staff, and getting out my maps, I there and then roughly planned out for them the whole of the work for the next six months: I then told them that I was probably going to fall very seriously ill and might possibly die, in view of which I required each and every one separately to swear before me by his own particular deity that he would do his duty faithfully and not take advantage of my illness in any one single way ; and those faithful fellows, with tears in their eyes, took their oath to me solemnly, and—let who will say what they like of the native—every man among them kept his word to me and worked like a brick during the whole of the next six months, though they had nobody to look after them. That night, and for many weeks afterwards, I was in high delirium and completely off my head, a special servant having to be kept in order to hunt away imaginary tigers from the various corners of my tent. In my opinion it is generally the long journey from the jungles to the nearest European station, perhaps some forty miles or more, which inevitably follows a mauling, that kills the patient. The system must first be allowed at least a few days' rest, before it is called upon to bear such a fearful strain. It was probably due to the observance of this obvious fact that my life was saved on this



occasion. Our head-quarters at Mandla, in a straight line, was 80 miles, while the nearest Government dispensary was at Dindori, 40 miles away. So my wife quite rightly used her own judgment and refused to move me at once, as is usually done in such cases, though she was all alone, except for our two little children and the natives, with only a very limited amount of medicines at her disposal.

After three days, however, on account of the want of the proper medicines and appliances, it was forced on her that I had either to be removed to Dindori or inevitably die where I was. So on the 11th of January, and succeeding days, I was carried by short stages in a dooly to Dindori. Hitherto my wife had rightly been keeping my wounds open in order to prevent suppuration; but on arrival at Dindori they were sewn up. After this I steadily got worse, so that it became absolutely out of the question to move to Mandla, for the journey would be certain to kill me.

The Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, by some means got to know that I had been mauled by a tiger and was lying in a precarious condition out in the wilds, and in the goodness of his heart he at once sent a telegram to the Civil Surgeon of Mandla to come out to me at once and to stay with me until I was well enough to be moved into head-quarters.

The Civil Surgeon of Mandla, Major Mitchell, arrived at Dindori on the 20th of January. Had he been a few hours later he would have been too late to save me, for, owing to the wounds having been sewn up, serious suppurations had taken place and sinuses had formed.

The following is the medical letter of the doctor in charge :—

“The wounds are 10 in number in the gluteal region of the left side, in a direction upwards under the crest of the ilium; some of them are deep and lacerated and others are deep and incised, and have burrowed into each other and formed into deep sinuses. Mr. Hicks was hurt on the 7th January 1890 and I arrived and took charge of the case on 20th January. I then found that extensive suppuration had taken place, and the drainage from the wounds considerable. There was also a patch of inflammation, very painful to the touch, immediately over the anterior superior spinous process which showed that suppuration at this place would soon occur,

and was carefully observed by me ; and immediately there was an indication of matter having formed under it, I made a deep incision posteriorly as near under the bone as I could without striking the bone or exposing it, but failed to draw matter from it. The next day I found a small opening, the size of a pea, had burrowed its way through the skin on top of the bone, and another small opening similar to the abovementioned was found to have occurred alongside of it. A small discharge of bloody matter daily escaped from these openings, and to-day the bone under them has become quite exposed as the openings have become larger, and as I find that the periosteum of the bone under these openings have become denuded, I now apprehend necrosis to occur. The discharge from all the wounds are healthy and some of the sinuses are filling up by healthy granulation. The shock to the system has been great, and there has been very great prostration and considerable fever. The prostration still continues, but to a less degree than formerly, and the fever is decidedly better. The treatment has been quinine and iron, the wounds dressed with a weak solution of perchloride of mercury, carbolic oil dressings and poultices. Bromide of potassium and morphia are given to relieve pain and procure sleep. These are, I think, the principal facts of the case, and in conclusion I would recommend that such things as carbolized and other dressings together with the necessary instruments (a pocket case for opening any sinuses, if necessary, should they be required for an operation) should be bought."

CAMP DINDORI :

(Sd.) W. M. MITCHELL,

*February 3rd, 1890.*

*Civil Surgeon.*

The following was a covering letter enclosing the above :—

My dear Mr. Hicks,—I send you a copy of my original report on your case which shows your condition at the time I saw you 13 days after your injuries.

When I first saw you, you were very low and prostrated and might have died at any time, that I found it impossible then to make a satisfactory examination of your hand owing to the intensely painful and swollen condition of the parts, but I found a compound fracture to exist at the wrist. There was a suppurating open wound (sinus) across the wrist. And all I could

do was to dress this wound daily, and to put the whole hand in a splint.

After a considerable time, when the pain and swelling of the hand had subsided to some extent, I was then able to make out that a fracture of one of the central bones of the hand, besides dislocations of two other bones of the hand, as well as dislocations of two fingers at their first joints, had occurred, I found it was then too late to do anything more for the hand beyond advising manipulation and friction.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.) W. N. MITCHELL.

*7th October 1890.*

For six months I lay thus in the intensest of agonies, hovering between life and death. I prayed for death to release me from my pain. I begged those around me to let me die. I wanted only to die to be left in peace, for I was weary of life, and weary of the hourly additions to my torture, which the dressings of my wounds entailed.

It is now seventeen years ago since I had this experience, but to the present day, and every day of my life. I still suffer pain in these various wounds, which become again intense whenever there is electricity in the air.

I have given, at the risk of wearying my readers, the above detailed account of my mauling, in the hopes that it may serve as a timely warning to those heroic nimrods who may think it worth while to follow on foot a wounded tiger into thick cover.

Is it worth while, I ask, to suffer this, and to suffer all your life for the sake of a folly of five minutes?

No tiger on earth is worth this, so don't do it, my young friends—think of this in time and refrain.

I cannot end this Chapter without acknowledging the great kindness and devotion of those to whom I owe my life at this period.

I cannot speak too highly of the exceptional skill and untiring attention of Major Mitchell who stayed with and nursed me in the jungles for over four months (January, February, March, April and a part of May) in the hot weather, far from all the luxuries of life, often as not sitting up with me all night. A perusal of his report on my

case will show that I undoubtedly owed my life, as much to his exceptional skill as to his timely arrival.

Other friends who were very good to us at this critical period were Colonel and Mrs. Hogg and Mr. C. Seagrim, the Superintendent of Police of Mandla, who, when the news of my being mauled reached them, immediately came out to us and did everything that could be done.

At Dindori where we were camped, there was not a single tree under the shade of which we could pitch our tents, which in the hot weather would have been fatal to me. But Colonel Hogg and Mr. Seagrim at once had thatched roofs built over our tents ; had hundreds of fowls collected, on the soups of which I existed for months, and stacks of firewood and grass piled up, as well as ample quantities of other necessary supplies collected and a guard of constables to wait on my camp till further orders.

I here take the opportunity of acknowledging my gratitude to Major Mitchell, Colonel and Mrs. Hogg and Mr. Seagrim for the great kindness they showed at that time.

The burden of "good nursing," with all what that means in a complicated case such as mine was, was the burden that fell on my wife. How heroically she bore it, the results have spoken for themselves. And under what circumstances ! Eighty miles from the nearest European station, in the heart of the wild forests, without proper medicines or appliances, and without a doctor for twenty days, she bore the burden of her lonely responsibility without flinching and never once lost her head.

Through the bitter frost of January when the water in the basins of our tents at night were frozen to the bottom, through the opposite extreme of the terrific heat of April and May in tents, she nursed me day and night, and had to be hunted away by the good doctor for the short spells of rest that she consented to take, till her poor frame was worn to a shadow through constant worry and fatigue, not for a few days only, nor yet for a few weeks, but for nine months did she maintain this vigil, but for which the best of medical skill must inevitably have failed ; such is the love of a good woman.

How many women would be capable of this under such circumstances ?

Thus, it was four months before I could be moved to Mandla, where I spent another five months in bed before I set foot to the ground, making a total of nine months in bed, during which time I never once got a single "bed sore"; those who understand what this means will know how highly this fact speaks for the nursing bestowed on me by my wife.

For months I was kept alive on nothing but champagne. Altogether my illness was a very expensive business. Besides this we had the expense of my son's education in England; so that I could not afford to go on sick leave.

Here I must acknowledge again the great kindness that was shown me by the Local Government, for though it was perfectly well known that I was quite incapable of doing any work myself, I was yet permitted to hold my post. But though I was incapable of doing the work myself, nevertheless my heroic wife carried on and directed the entire work of my official establishment—giving the necessary orders, checking accounts, drawing up reports, etc., etc.—for, after seeing me carry on my work for so many years in her presence, generally in the same tent, she knew and was as well up in routine as I was myself. Thus for nine months my wife carried on my official work, besides nursing me day and night.

In November I received orders transferring me to Jubbulpore, which station is considered the plum of the Central Provinces. I arrived at Jubbulpore on the 3rd November 1890, where I was visited by the great sportsman Sir Samuel Baker, who then happened to be at Jubbulpore; he was good enough to visit me several times, and we had long chats on shikar and on the merits of various weapons and sporting bullets, his conclusions on the subject being much the same as mine, which I have given in a separate Chapter.

I then went to Calcutta to have my hand seen to at the Medical College Hospital. Here they wished to amputate my hand; but this I point blank refused to permit, so the next best thing was done—all the bones of the hand being again broken up and reset.

I then returned to Jubbulpore, but shortly afterwards had again to go into hospital and have my hand broken up again. This was done several times. At any rate I have saved the remains





of my poor old hand, though it is of very little use except to serve as a rest for my gun, which was principally what I wanted it for.

I took to riding again, and of course my horse must bolt with me, and having the use of only one hand, I was unable to stop him. The beast headed straight for home and his stable. The stable had a low entrance ; at first I thought I might be able to squeeze through by bending down low, but as we neared it at full speed, I saw that I would be brained, so I was obliged to throw myself off, being thrown violently against the wall and then on to the ground. This fall of course burst open all my wounds. My poor wife saw all that occurred, and picked me up unconscious ; my troubles then started over again for a time.



MR. AND MRS. HICKS AND CAMP FOLLOWERS

However, my constitution was good, so I was soon on my feet again. In the meanwhile my old friend W. King, who was then the Forest Officer at Betul, was also mauled by a wounded tiger ; fortunately he got off comparatively lightly, and then came and stayed with us during his convalescence. There were now two old cripples hobbling about the house for my wife to look after.

W. K. then went Home, and I out to camp. I at once took to shooting again, and on the 10th of December shot a panther. The remainder of my bag during December, as taken from my diary, was 9 black bucks, 17 snipe, 30 teal, 3 wild geese, 13 duck, 7 jungle-fowls, 9 grouse, 2 jungle-sheep, 1 hyena, which shows that I was fairly on the way to mending.





## CHAPTER XLIX.

### INITIATION.

My son H. landed in India on the 3rd December 1895, just in time to take part in our winter tour round the Jubbulpore District. I had only another year to serve in the Forest Department, so I was glad to have him out from England, where he had been for nearly ten years for his education, in order that I might teach the young idea how to shoot, and teach him the main ropes in big-game shooting. I soon found that he did not require much teaching as far as the actual handling of a rifle went, for he was a Volunteer "marksman" and a winner of many prizes, winning a silver Challenge Cup soon after he landed in India, with a score of 48 points out of a possible of 50, at a 4-inch bull's-eye at 200 yards, and that with a regulation Martini-Henri rifle.

As for his shooting at running and flying game, I found that the young rascal had been in the habit of spending portions of his holidays, sometimes in the aristocratic company of professional poachers, so that he had not much to learn in that line either. I am afraid he had done only what his father and uncles did before him when they were boys, in the dear old Eastern Counties where the farmers used to speak of us as "them young devils, the Parson's sons," being worse than any poachers.

However, there were no big game in the Eastern Counties, so I had my own special branch in which to coach the youngster and an

apt pupil he proved, for within two months of date of his landing he had bagged a tigress and a large panther, besides a variety of other game. It is now in regard to his second tiger that we are about to deal.

We arrived at the village of Bhursa in the neighbourhood of the Mahanuddi, in the north-eastern corner of the Jubbulpore District, on the 12th of February 1896. There was an exceptionally large male tiger on the Mahanuddi, near this village, who had managed to baffle even the great Sir Samuel Baker who had been trying after him here, so it occurred to me to wind up my son's tour with this old tiger if possible.

The village of Bhursa is situated out in the open country, on the banks of a small nalla that runs into the Mahanuddi, a nalla which is somewhat deeply cut into the soft sandy soil, and which contains only a small stream of water with deeper pools here and there, forming the only supply of water in this neighbourhood. On a former occasion when camped at this village, and cholera was raging all around, I found, higher up in this very stream of water which supplied our camp, several cholera corpses chucked into the water.

Alongside of Bhursa stands a solitary sugar-loaf hill, some 600 feet high, with almost perpendicular sides of rock, which, in olden times, was used as a fort, but now given up entirely to thousands of blue-rock pigeons, where also an occasional panther or bear may be found.

We had a longish march, so on arriving at camp our party was unanimous, when we found that breakfast was not yet ready, on having something cold to eat, and hunt was immediately organized for our ham, a 26-lb. ham, lately got up from Treacher, on which we had started on the knuckle end so as to leave the enjoyment of the better portion till the last. One of the children at last found it on a dish on a side table, neatly covered over with a napkin, and carried it as it was to the table to be carved, while we all seated ourselves round the table in anticipation, for we were hungry after our long early morning march. On the napkin being removed, lo and behold there was only the skeleton of our lovely ham, only the bone left, the remainder having been apparently gnawed off.

Our general factotum, a Madrasi by name of Lachman, was immediately summoned, and he confessed that he had placed the ham

on the table to be ready for us, but, on returning shortly afterwards, found that a black pariah dog had jumped on to the table, and, having secured the ham, had demolished it under the table.

Hearing this, my son went over to the corner of the tent and picked up his shot-gun and, having loaded it, went forth to look for that dog, which we had seen hanging about our tent when we arrived. He found the dog in the act of carrying off the dinner of one of the servants. Simultaneously, another pie dog dashed by with one of our best hens in his mouth, so H. got a right and left, administering swift retribution with each barrel of his gun. This is the only way to deal with such cases ; for once a pariah has met with a stroke of success at a camp, he haunts it persistently day and night, so that nothing is safe until he has been disposed of. Lachman I have with me in my service still (1908), a splendid all-round servant, whom I picked up when he was a mere lad, more than twenty years ago.

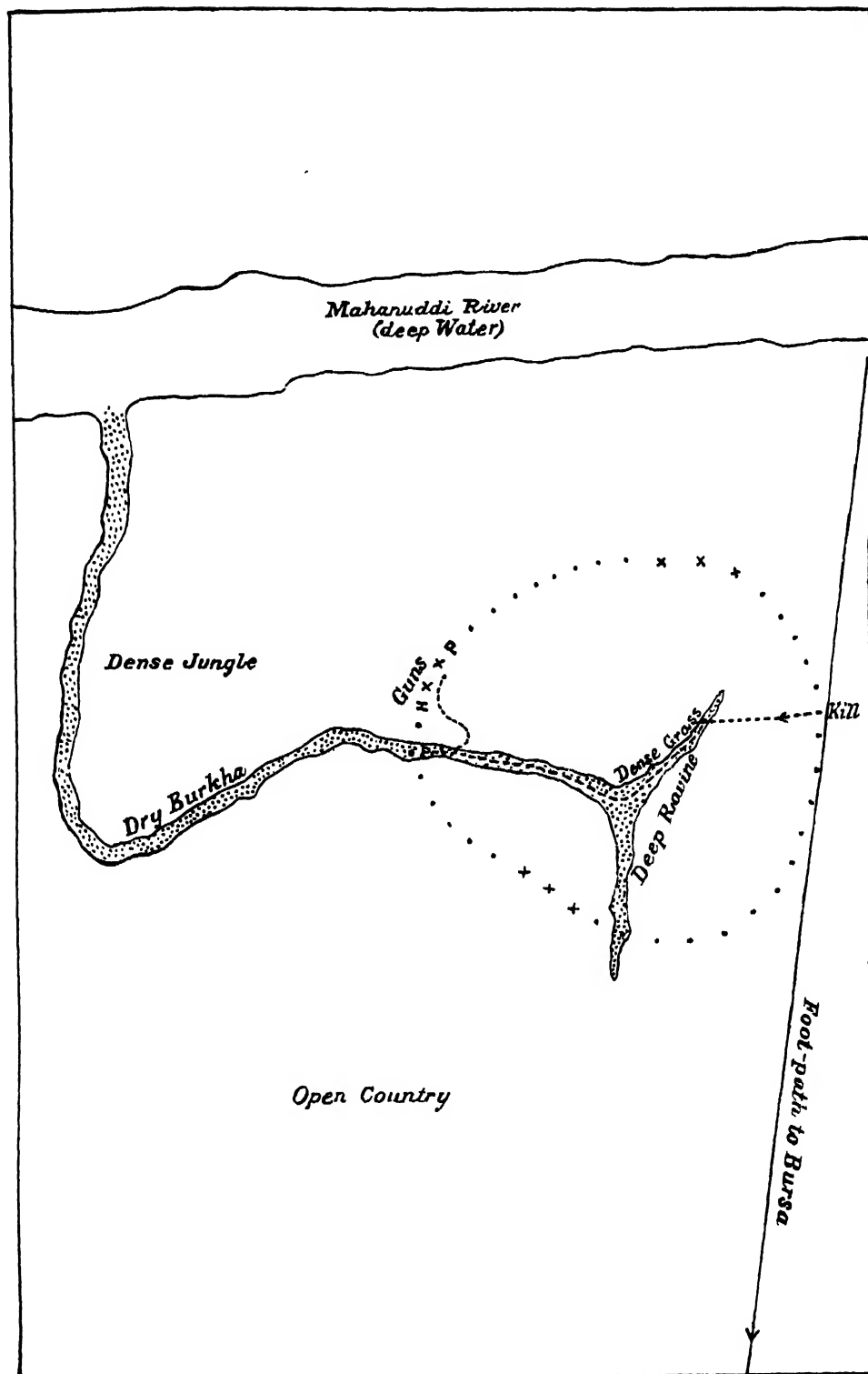
On the next morning a kill was duly reported to have taken place near the Mahanuddi. So, having all the men ready, we were able to make an early start.

On arriving at the scene, we found that the kill had taken place on a footpath near the head of a deep grass ravine, into which the remains of the buff had been dragged, and, from the appearance of the locality, the tiger was in all probability lying close to his kill, probably within forty yards of the spot where he had killed it, and where we were then standing in whispered consultation.

As soon as we realized that the tiger must be close by, we silently and swiftly withdrew. And then, leaving the beaters at a safe distance to await the return of the shikari, we circled round to the same ravine again some seven hundred yards further up.

There were no footmarks to show that the tiger had gone out ; but the ravine itself was very deep, and altogether a risky place for a shot, on account of the danger of misjudging elevation, etc. So I selected two posts (H and F) on the level ground above the bank where a fair shot could be obtained.

But for this the tiger would have to be forced out of the ravine down which he was sure to come, for it was full of dense grass, while the cover above on the banks was, by contrast, comparatively thin ;



BURSA.



for this purpose I placed (at P) three men together on one tree, and also strengthened them by placing several pieces of newspaper on sticks across the bed of the ravine slightly in advance of the men, who were also each made to take up a supply of stones with them, for I knew the tiger would make determined efforts to break past them here, and that nothing but determined mobbing and stone-throwing on their part would turn him. By placing several men together on one tree in a difficult place like this, it gives men confidence to act up to their duties properly, which a single man alone might not do.

The stops were then put up in the usual manner, and H. and I having taken up our seats, the shikari was sent round to bring up the beat.

As I had anticipated, the tiger came straight up the ravine or *barkha* as the natives call such places, and the first intimation we had of his presence was a loud roar with which he first discovered my paper stops. Then followed roar after roar, as the beast repeatedly charged the position; but the three men at that point acted well, and drove him back time after time. Until at last, with a grunt of disgust the big beast sprang up the bank and came at a gallop along the level ground in front of H., giving him a broadside shot, and his 12-gauge bullet struck him fairly, carrying away the top portion of his heart. But in spite of this the beast went on, though at a slower and rather wobbly gait, until a .577 bullet from my rifle in the back of his neck dropped him almost at the foot of my ladder.

This was an exceptionally large male tiger, measuring, as taken from my diary, 9 feet 10 inches. Thus, within two months and ten days of landing in India, H. had bagged two large tigers and a panther which perhaps does not fall to the lot of every young man so soon after landing. On glancing over the diary, I find that H.'s bag up to this date had been as follows :—

- 1 tigress at Machmacha on 23rd January 1896, length 9 feet 2 inches,
- 1 tiger at Bhursa on 13th February 1896, length 9 feet 10 inches,
- 1 panther at Gopalpur on 3rd February 1896, length 7 feet 5 inches,

- 2 stag cheetles,
- 1 stag samber,
- 1 bull-neilgai,
- 1 khakar,
- 4 black-bucks,
- 2 wild boars,
- 2 great Indian bustards,
- 20 pea-fowl and jungle-fowl,
- 26 wild duck,
- 137 teal,
- 20 snipe,

besides a number of pigeons, grouse, quail, etc., etc.

This was not a bad all-round introduction for the first two months.

A MIXED BAG

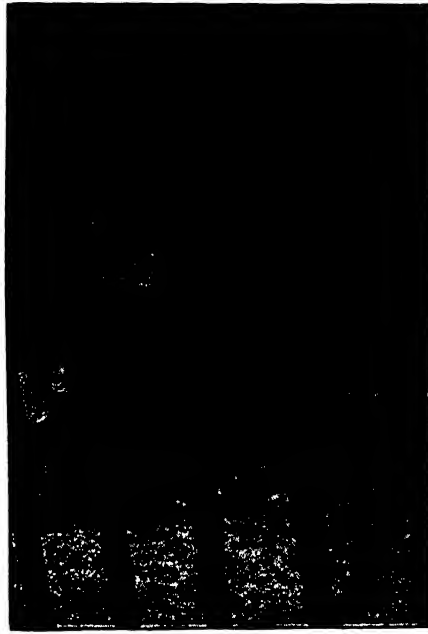
2 BLACK BUCK, 1 AFFRICATOR, 1 BULL NILEOM



II W II.







## CHAPTER I.

### OUT-MANŒUVRED.

*A propos* of wild animals becoming educated in certain localities as to the stereotyped methods employed against them there, and of the knowledge they in time acquire of the direction of the true danger, I give the following as an example.

In the No. 12 Block of the Murwarra Range, District Jubbulpore, there was a certain tree that used to be the stereotyped post of every sportsman who used to beat this Block. Here there was also an old tigress that used to haunt this Block off and on for years, with the result that she in time became acquainted with the significance of this tree in relation to her periodical repasts on fat young buffs in the nalla below, and the inevitable beat that followed on the day after such a meal, for she was fired at several times from this tree and finally on one occasion slightly wounded from it.

The latter fact only served to confirm the convictions of the local shikaries as to the virtues of this tree, with the result the next time

they placed a Sahib here and tried beating the tigress up to it, she quietly lay down about three hundred yards in front of the tree, and when the beaters came up, charged back over them, mauling one man severely

This should have been a warning, but next year they tried the same game again, with the result this time of one beater being killed outright and another wounded.

The tigress was now fully educated in regard to this local question, and, what was much more serious, had learnt her power to attack and kill even the hitherto dreaded human being, for shortly afterwards she attacked, without provocation, an innocent woodcutter whom she accidentally met in the jungles and also wounded another, so that my men were now afraid to go into the forests to do their work.

When the matter was reported to me, I saw that it was high time for me to interfere, for I had important charcoal works near by in Block No. 13, and I had just signed, in my official capacity, a contract to supply the Jubbulpore Brewery with 10,000 maunds of charcoal, regarding which I will quote from my diary :—

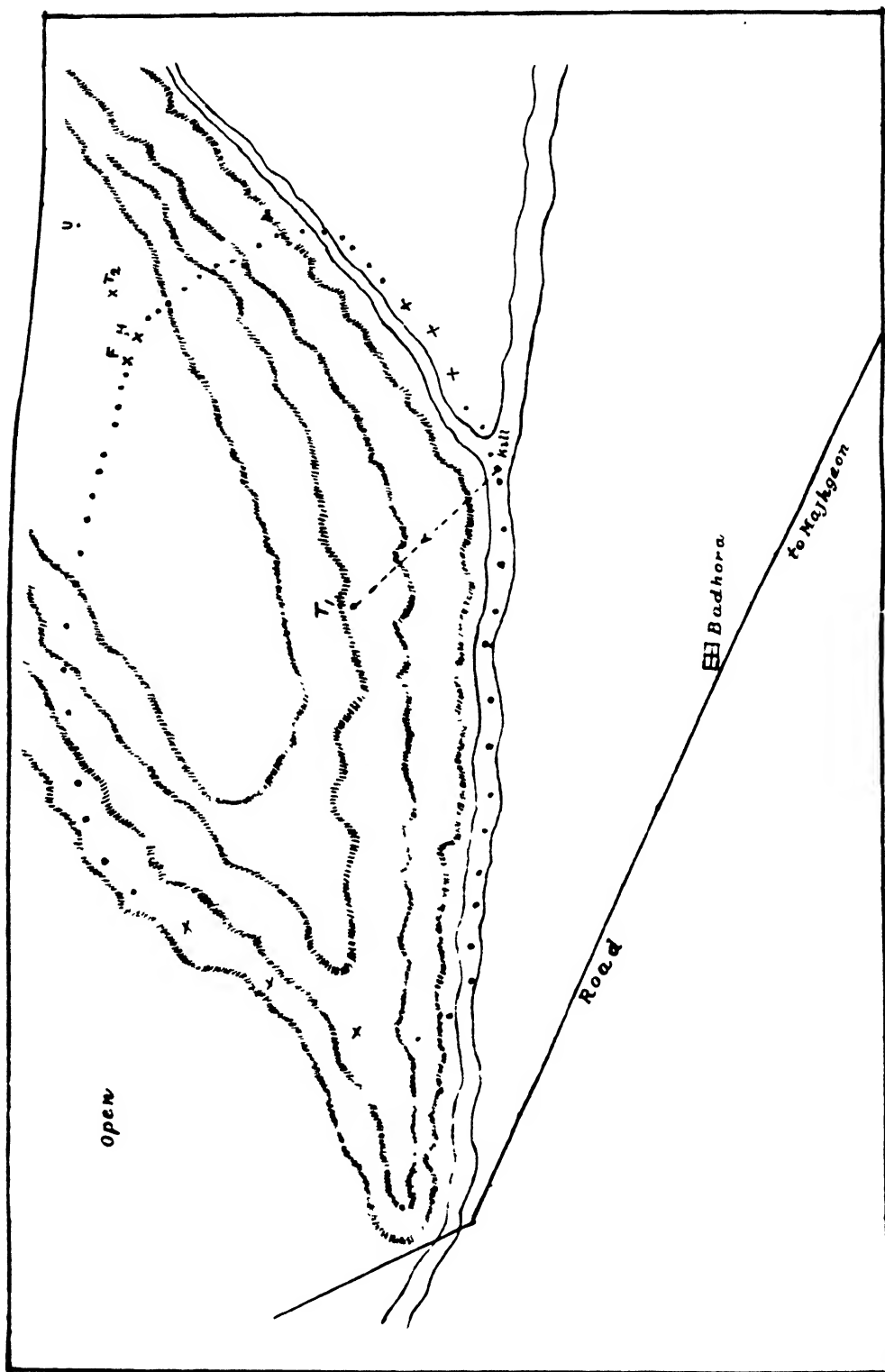
“ Monday, 18th January 1897, Camp Badhora—Halt. Mr. Parsons (my Assistant) is getting on well with the charcoal-burning. Opened out one kiln and found about 25 per cent. of large good charcoal : this is for the Brewery where I have contracted for 10,000 maunds. 19th, Tuesday. H. shot the tigress in Block No. 12. Length, 8 feet 7 inches. This is the one that killed the *chokra* (boy) and since wounded another.”

Badhora is about two miles from Majhgaon where we had had our Christmas camp of which I have spoken elsewhere, and about fourteen miles from Katni junction.

When trying for this tigress I was morally certain that she now had a fixed policy for this Block, namely, that she would behave in exactly the same manner again as on the last two occasions. I therefore determined to take advantage of the knowledge.

Referring to the sketch, behind the Badhora Police out-post, to the east is a plateau covered with grass and tree jungle, round the western base of which, between it and Badhora, runs a river of water densely shaded by large *jamun* trees.





SHADORA.

Tigers rarely remain by the river in the day, but would kill there at night, and in the day would go and lie up on the plateau above. In every other direction, except to the south-east, was open country ; so that there was practically only one direction in which this plateau could be beaten, with which the tigress was well acquainted, and also knew that she was in no danger until she should arrive at a certain point (U). She had no objection to coming up to within about two or three hundred yards (T2) of this point, and after that she had her own policy.

Once convinced of this, the remedy of course suggested itself to me, namely, to sit a few hundred yards below the point she was willing to come to without making a fuss.

The kill had occurred at the usual place at the junction of the two nallas. Here the tiger had a choice of two directions in which to drag his kill ; either to the east towards the plateau, as on this occasion, or up the south-east nalla bed, as did a large male tiger on a former occasion when I sent a telegram to Mr. Stanyon of Jubbulpore whom I had promised to take out, and who thereon joined me and shot the tiger, like a man, when brought out to him.

On the present occasion, however, we worked round and up this nalla, and then struck off to the east till we reached the "usual" tree (U) ; the shikaris apparently thought I was going, as a matter of course, to sit here, but to their surprise I refused, and proceeded to work down very quietly towards the kill for about six hundred yards before I halted and selected a site at which to sit up ; it was a shallow *gully* full of short dry grass, on a tree (H) growing out of the side of which I placed my son H., while I myself took a position (F) on the opposite side only about forty yards away.

We had to move very silently, for we knew the tigress could not be very far away ; and as soon as the stops had all been placed, we sent the men round to fetch up the beat.

In about an hour's time the beat started, and a few minutes later I saw the tigress slip over a ridge towards us and disappear into a dense piece of *saharu* immediately in front of us, where she apparently lay down to think over the matter.

For the next half an hour there was no sign of the tigress, though we both knew she was within a hundred yards of us all the time.

The beaters advanced steadily, and finally reached the spot where we last saw the tigress ; still there were no signs of her moving. I was getting very nervous for the beaters, thinking that perhaps the tigress had heard us getting up our posts, and was therefore preparing to enact her old game of charging the beaters from this point.

So it was with a sigh of relief that I finally saw her suddenly slip into the grass *gully* and come forward at a rapid walk straight towards my son.

H. waited until she was almost immediately below his ladder and then "browned" her between her shoulders ; and, the moment she was clear of his ladder, I also let her have it behind her shoulders. She heeled over, circled round about twelve feet, and then fell stone dead at the foot of H.'s ladder.

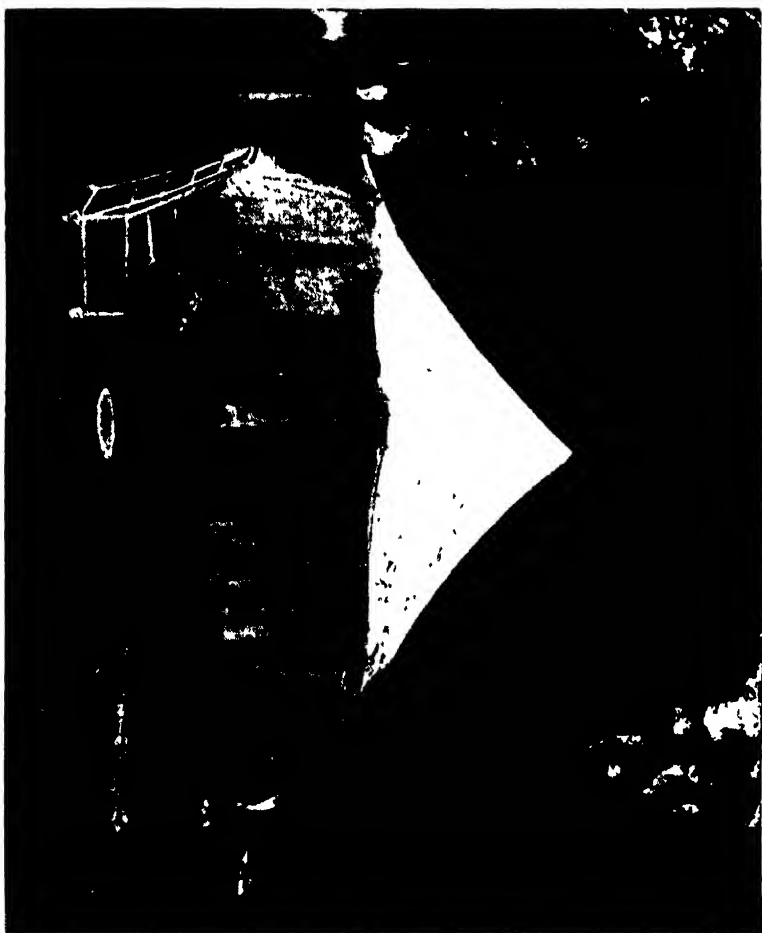
H. gave her another one in her neck to make sure, and then commenced to get down his ladder, but I stopped him doing so until the beaters came, more on principle and as a lesson than anything, for I was morally certain that there were no other tigers in the beat, but one never really knows.

When the beaters arrived, we got down from our trees and sat on the slain, smoked and fought our battle over again.

At last this cunning and vicious old devil had been out-witted, for she had calculated on being able to advance at least another six hundred yards without meeting with the danger, which she knew perfectly well was waiting ahead of her.

But we had to be thankful that she had postponed her intentions towards the beaters on this occasion for, when she lay down and kept us on tenter-hooks during that half hour, there is not much doubt as to what was then passing in her mind.

Such is the dread, fortunately, that human beings collectively inspire in wild animals, that though this vicious and cunning old brute had undoubtedly fully made up her mind to finally brave an attack on her dreaded human foes, she yet preferred to postpone the enactment of this unpleasant necessity to the last moment, and thereby met her fate.



REMAINS OF A "BHCNT" OR CAMP FIRE







H W HICKS

*30th May 1904 at Khetra*

## CHAPTER LI.

### A TEN-FOOT TIGER.

One hears, on occasions, of a lot of ten-foot tigers, and sometimes even of a twelve-foot tiger, but though I have myself shot a few tigers in my time, and have also seen a few tigers that I did not shoot, only on one occasion have I seen a tiger that honestly measured ten feet in length as it lay on the ground before it was skinned. This tiger we shot in the Sewaliks, in the district of Saharanpur, where my son was at the time, in 1904, officiating as Superintendent of Police.

On the death of my dear wife in that year, H. suggested, by way of distracting our sad thoughts, a tiger-shoot in the Sewalik forests of his district, so we all joined him at Saharanpur.

However, at first, there were considerable local difficulties.

Our objective was the old tiger at Khara (at the point where the Sewaliks are intersected by the river Jumna) who was reputed far and wide to be the oldest and largest tiger in the Sewaliks, and who,

the inhabitants around Khara said, had been there for over twenty years, having baffled each and every of the scores of sportsmen who came in constant relays to try for him.

This was in the middle of the hot weather, in May, so as we had my two daughters with us ; it was a *sine qua non* that we should have at least one elephant on which to travel in the jungles. But though the district possessed six elephants, we failed at first to obtain even one.

However, after a lot of trouble, we got one elephant. But it was pretty obvious that we would probably also have difficulties in obtaining beaters. Fortunately, however, several of the villages in the neighbourhood of Khara were owned by an European, Mr. J. Powell of the Opium Department in Bengal, with whom I was acquainted. So I at once wrote to him and asked him if he would kindly let his villagers help us ; or, better still, to join us himself if he could.

This he did, that is, he joined us in person, so that now we were quite independent as far as numbers and loyalty of our beaters were concerned, which undoubtedly was half the battle.

I will now refer to my diary of that period :—

“ 13th May. Camp Gangaro ; Powell joined us. To date, shot 17 hares with our dogs.

14th May. Shot two hares.

15th May. Marched to Nowshera.

16th to 18th May. H. inspecting Police Station. Shot nine hares in the evening.

19th May. Marched to Badshaibagh.

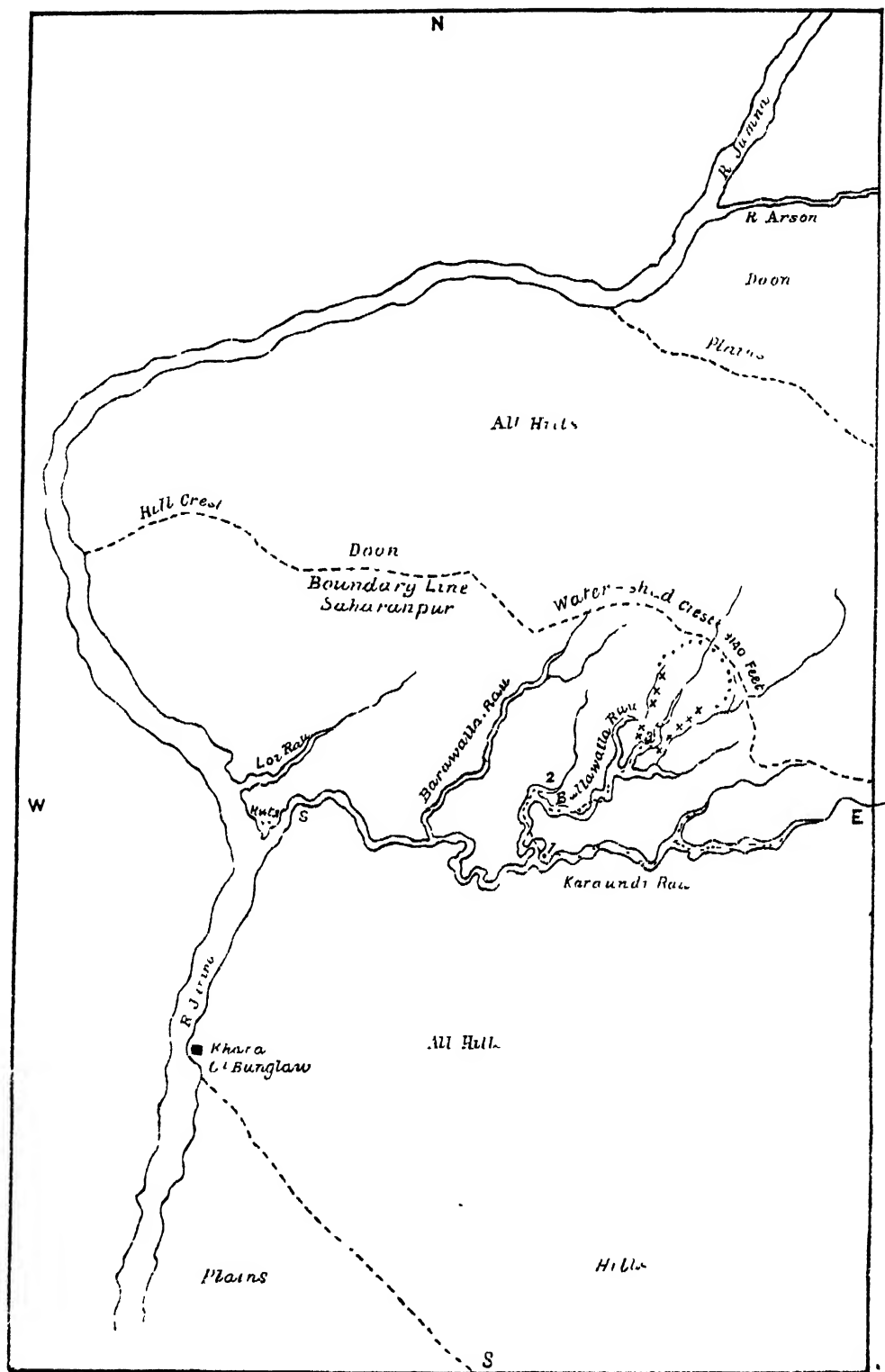
20th May. H. went back to Saharanpur.

27th May. Marched to Khara.

28th and 29th May. Explored the jungles. Found the shikari had been tying the buffs up in the wrong place ; he had been tying them down below, behind the Ghosies' huts at Karondi, while the tiger was living miles away right up on the top of the hills. Tied a buff ourselves in the right place, where the old tiger lately killed a stag samber. ”

Sure enough, next morning, news was brought in that the tiger had found the buff we had tied up ourselves on the previous night and had killed it. The shikaris had been tying up buffs for us a





week before our arrival without obtaining a kill. It was too hot and long a business for the girls to come out so, as our beaters were ready in anticipation of a kill, Powell, H. and I at once mounted our solitary elephant and started off to inspect the kill.

The canal bungalow at Khara in which we were then staying was situated at a very picturesque spot on the banks of and overlooking the broad Jumna to the west ; and on the east was itself backed and overlooked by range upon range of the towering Sewalik hills, which at this point, abutting on the Jumna, are some eight miles in width, with the water-shed in the centre consisting of a continuous ridge of over 3,000 feet in height. This is a mass of deep "raus" or dry river-beds, overhung by enormous perpendicular cliffs, with millions of off-shoots, in the shape of deep grass-covered ravines and valleys. To look for a tiger in such a place would be worse than looking for a needle in a hay-stack, but for the fact that in the hot weather season the supply of water within this vast chaos of hills is limited to only a few springs, which are often right up on top near the crest or central water-shed of the Sewaliks.

There is of course any amount of water down below, in and near the Jumna, where also a number of cattle are grazed ; but though a tiger might visit these quarters occasionally at night, they are much too disturbed, and too accessible to sportsmen, for a cunning old tiger such as we were now after, to lie up here.

This old tiger did not seem to care much for cattle, being essentially a game-killer, and spent most of his time right up on top of the water-shed, where we found his foot-marks and the remains of sambar and other game which he had killed. We found the head and horns of a sambar stag killed by him lately right up near the source of the Karaundi Rau, so we tied our kill at the point (No. 1) where Bullawalla Rau enters it, some three miles higher up in the hills from the spot (S) behind the Ghosies' huts, where the professional native shikaris invariably used to tie the buffs of all sportsmen who came to this neighbourhood.

From the bungalow to these huts, a distance of about two miles, the only road is a track, at places only about three feet wide, along the face of the cliff overhanging the river Jumna. It was no pleasant sensation to be on the back of an elephant while it went

along this precarious foothold with a forty-foot drop below ; how she managed it was a wonder.

However, we reached the huts safely. After that we proceeded up the broad dry bed of the Karaundi Rau, dry but for a little trickle of water and pools here and there, which, however, was quite sufficient for the requirements of a tiger.

The scene of the kill was five miles from our headquarters. The heat was terrific, and we had to hang wet towels over our heads and down our backs for fear of sunstroke, for those deep *gullies* were like ovens with the radiation of the heat from the sides of the cliffs.

On arriving at the kill, we found a very bad sign to start with, namely, that though the tiger had broken the rope he had not taken the kill more than twenty yards, nor had he made any attempt to conceal it, which to me was a clear indication that he had no intention of returning to it, hence had probably gone slick away possibly for miles.

We had with us a certain man who was reputed to be *the* shikari of the District, who was always requisitioned by every district official who went out tiger-shooting.

This man now gave us his advice, saying that he knew these jungles well, that it was impossible to beat them successfully, that no Sahib had ever been able to beat out a tiger here and never would be able to, for which reason he had not tied our buffs here when we sent him on ahead, but had tied them behind the huts at the mouth of the Rau, therefore we must not attempt to beat here, but must sit up for the tiger in the evening, it was our only chance, etc., etc.

Had the tiger taken away the kill, this suggestion would have been feasible, but by leaving it out in the open to be eaten up by vultures, it was clear he had gone for good and had probably gone far.

His footprints showed that he had gone up the Bullawalla Rau ; if he had stuck to the river-bed we would be able to track him, but if he had left this and had gone up on to the grass-covered hills, he was lost.

However, at night, a tiger generally chooses the easiest road, so we got out our map and examined the geography of the place. In the attached sketch-map I have only marked the river-beds that were worked by us on that day ; besides these, there were thousands of other *gullies* in every direction. It seemed a hopeless job, but

we nevertheless made up our minds to slog him down by tracking if possible, before we tried any forlorn beats.

It was slow and tedious work, for we often lost his tracks, but by casting on ahead, always managed to pick them up again. After the first half a mile, the track suddenly turned off up a deep narrow *gully* (No. 2), and for the moment we thought we had tracked him to his lair, for it was an ideal spot, but closer scrutiny showed just one footmark leading out of it again, which saved us making a fatal blunder.

For the next half a mile we found no more footmarks, but we held on doggedly, and were rewarded by again picking up his footprints, heading straight towards the source of Bullawalla Rau.

At last the track left the main Rau and turned into a narrow *gully*, from which there were no outgoing footmarks. We were now very near the central water-shed of the Sewaliks. We had left all signs of water far behind us by this time, so now the whole question hinged on whether there was water up in this *gully*, or not.

If there was water, we would probably find our friend "at home" here, for he was now far from the haunts of men and other disturbing influences.

Our hopes rose as we noticed the sand in the *gully* becoming more and more dark in colour the further we advanced. At last, on turning a bend to our right, our eyes were gladdened by the sight of a delightful pool of water, by the side of which were the fresh marks of the old tiger having lain partly in, and partly out, of the water.

It was about 2 P.M. now, and the shade had left the pool about twenty minutes before our arrival, so that we were able to tell, almost to the minute, when the tiger had been forced to leave the pool by the sun working round on to it.

There was no need to look any further; he was probably within two or three hundred yards at some other pool higher up.

But the cliffs and hills that towered above us in that direction were frightful, so that the possibility or impossibility of sending men round to beat them down, had now to be discussed, for I, for one, was certainly not going to climb up to the top of those thousand feet precipices for any tiger.



So we withdrew again to the mouth of the *gully* and held a council of war with the local men.

The latter at once said that it was impossible to do what we wanted them to do, saying that there was no possible way up which to go on to the top of the ridge, short of a day's journey.

On examining the map, however, I noticed that there was another and a similar *gully* to the one which we wished to beat, running parallel near by to the east, up which they might be able to find a way. This I pointed out, and offered Rs. 5 to the first man who would come forward and volunteer to show a way up; upon which a Ghosi at once stepped forward and offered to show the way.

The difficulty was now over, but we all had to be sharp, for we had only four hours of daylight left.

Having sent the beaters to find their way round and start the beat, we, with a few stops—for only a few here were required—proceeded to the pool, at which point the *gully* was widest, being here about a hundred yards across.

Here we put up three ladders and then drew lots for places.

The best place fell to my son H., the worst to me, and the centre place to Mr. Powell. So when the stops had been placed, we each took up our respective posts and awaited the beat.

In about two hours' time the beat started, and almost immediately we were cheered by hearing the tiger speak higher up the *gully*.

He then tried several times to escape out at the sides, but the stops turned him.

At length I heard the slip-slop of the tiger's feet in the dead leaves of the nalla, coming straight down towards H., and I saw H. slowly bring his gun to his shoulder and wait like that for fully a minute before he fired.

The bullet struck the tiger in the shoulder, going through his body and came out the other side. The tiger, however, recovered himself and made a rush over the bank in front of Powell, who then undoubtedly made the shot of his life, for he hit the tiger, pulling both barrels simultaneously, in the *eye*, killing him instantly, while at the same moment I also punted the tiger in the ribs with another bullet.

Thus at last the old monster, who the villagers here told us had dodged sportsmen for twenty years in this locality, was dead.

And what a monster ! He was one of the biggest tigers killed I have ever seen in the whole course of my tiger-shooting.

We had had very hard work to get him, but this beast was well worth it, and the fact that we had succeeded was due entirely to our own personal efforts.

The fact that we were able to overcome local difficulties successfully was entirely due to the aid which Mr. Powell gave us in supplying us with reliable men and stops, without whom, I am certain, we would never have been able to beat out that tiger to the guns. The measurements of this tiger, as entered in my diary at the time, are as follows :—



THE KHARA TIGER, 10 feet  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.  
Note the enormous development of muscles

1. Girth round body, 66 inches.
2. Length from nose to tip of tail, 10 feet  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
3. Length of body, from nose to root of tail, 7 feet  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
4. Length of tail, 3 feet.
5. Height at shoulder, 48 inches.
6. Girth round head, 38 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches.
7. Girth of neck, 35 inches.
8. Girth of ankle, 12 inches.
9. Girth of fore-foot, 12 inches.
10. Girth of fore-arm, 18 inches.

It seems to be a peculiarity of hill game-killers that their feet are exceptionally small and compact. This huge beast, whose measurements are given above, left a footmark scarcely larger than that

of a large male panther. There may be a lesson in this, that is, if you find very large footprints of a tiger right up on the top of high hills, he probably does not belong there, but will be found lower down, so for him—look down, not up ; but if they are small, as a rule look up, not down. I give this possible hint for what it may be worth. This tiger, although so large, was very compactly built and had nothing of the loose flabby look about him that a similar tiger down in the plains would have had.

The above account is of one of the tigers we have shot in the United Provinces, where big-game shooting districts are very few indeed. On the whole, except on rare occasions, such as in the above incident, while officiating for a few weeks only in a temporary vacancy in such a district, the majority of the United Provinces officials are practically cut off from all hopes of ever obtaining any big-game shooting in their own district, as they would in more favoured provinces. This is a great pity, for there is no other recreation in the world that will so well develop and perfect, as does the pursuit of big-game, all those fine qualities that are so essential to a good District Officer in India.

This chapter being the last one of the anecdotes in this book, the remaining being more of the nature of disquisitions, I will include here also some remarks in regard to the climates of India, and the care, or rather disregard, of health, as affecting the cases of young men when they first come out to this country.

In dealing with a matter like this, it is best to detail specific cases, and, as far as possible, of personal experience. So I will give those of myself and my son.

It is not within the means of everyone to run Home every other year for a change. In forty-two years I went Home only once, and on that occasion only for three months.

In my opinion, it takes at least fifteen years for a man to become acclimatized to the country, and even then, not till he has safely reached the age of 35 years. After that he is probably "salted" and will probably have little to fear, with ordinary care, from the climate.

For the first fifteen years of his stay in India, every young man is in considerable danger of losing his life from some of the many causes



BEHIND THE BUNGALOW.  
HOME-INDUSTRIES DULY PROTECTED (MILK, WATER, WASHING).



A TYPE OF THE "STANDARD PATTERN"

In some Indian districts there is occasionally a difficulty in obtaining house accommodation for the District Officers. In such cases Government builds houses for its officers through the red-taped agency of the Public Works Department, limiting the rent to be paid by the officer occupying it to ten per cent. of his salary. Such houses are usually built on one of the "Standard Patterns," the first principle of which is permanency of construction which will reduce future repairs, etc., almost to vanishing point. The result is that these houses are made of thin *ston* walls, iron beams and *tiled* roofs, the expensive material of which swallows up all the money grant and so limits the accommodation to small, cramped rooms which often do not even permit a *punkha* to be fully pulled without banging against the walls.

Yet European Officers are compelled by rules to live in these constructions, wherever such exist, even though far better houses owned by private local house-owners may be available at a much cheaper rent ; for private house-owners naturally build their houses with a view to *comfort*, namely, with thick non-conducting mud walls, thatched roofs and large airy rooms suitable for India.

I have taken the opportunity of bringing this matter to public notice in the hopes that it may lead to a reform.

that are always at hand, such as malaria, dysentery, enteric, cholera, liver-abscess, etc., etc., unless the young man has exceptional domestic facilities, such as a careful wife, or some other member of his family, to look after him; for we all know how utterly hopeless it is, in the majority of cases, to expect a young man, who is all by himself, to maintain unremittingly even the ordinary precautions on which the great question of life, or death, in India usually depends.

My own case, as a young man out here, was no exception to the rule. I had neither wife, nor sister, nor any kith or kin of any kind, in the country to advise me, or to urge against and point out daily my various foolish acts in regard to the preservation of my health. The result was that, in spite of my abnormally strong constitution, I suffered for years in a manner that would have snuffed out a man with a weaker constitution in a few weeks. For the first fifteen years, I suffered continually from malarial fever and dysentery. Even while I had violent dysentery on me, I remember I was guilty of such foolish acts as lying, during the hot weather, the whole day long in a tub of cold water. To boil my water, or to look after my kitchen, were matters that never entered my head, or if they did, I probably scoffed at such molly-coddling ideas. In Chanda, I got so bad with malaria, that a European who happened to pass accidentally by my camp, found me in a raving delirium, with a letter under my pillow addressed by me to my old father in England, bidding him good-bye, for, as I thought, I knew I was about to die. However, my good Samaritan had me carried into Chanda, where they pulled me round.

In Mysore, also, my dysentery continued as bad as ever, and the doctor sent me on several coasting voyages, for I could not afford to go Home, to try and shake it off, but with no avail. At last I was on the point of getting a liver-abscess, when suddenly I got cholera. I had now married, and, owing to the exertions of my dear wife, I recovered from the attack of the cholera also, and from that day to this I have never had dysentery again.

Being married to a careful wife, vastly altered my circumstances. I was now no longer allowed to play the fool with my health. All my domestic arrangements were carefully supervised; my drinking water was carefully boiled every day, and I no longer had to eat any kind of dish which a servant might put before me.

The result was that, within a few years, my constitution completely re-asserted itself, and, except for an occasional go of temporary fever, I have been hale and hearty ever since, except for physical accidents.

Thus, during the first fifteen years of my life in India, I had had a terrible time; but with the improvement in my domestic arrangements, helped by ultimate acclimatization, I became a strong man again. For one thing, on returning to the Central Provinces, I was fortunate in my lot being cast in a comparatively high altitude; for the Central Provinces are in the nature of a more or less high plateau, in many parts fully 2,000 feet above the sea-level, while in some parts it is over 3,000 feet. It was very fortunate for me that



H. W. HICKS AT B.G.S., 1895.

it was so, for my finances could not afford the luxury of frequent changes Home. So, had my lot been cast in a low-lying country like Bengal or the United Provinces, matters might have turned out very differently with me.

As a little chap, my son H. also suffered from dysentery and fever, and was on the point of death when I hurried him off to England, to be placed at school. However, for the first year, he was too weakly to be sent off at once to school, so I left him with his cousins, the family of my boyhood companion Reverend Barrington Syer, of Ketton Rectory, which is only about two miles from my old home at Sturmer.

A year of bird-nesting and romping about with his cousins in the fresh country air of the old country, soon put him on his legs again.

Hearing that he was strong enough, I had him placed at the Bedford Grammar School, one of the finest Public Schools in England, containing about a thousand boys, where he was left to fight his way for some eight years, spending his holidays frequently on the Continent, either in Germany or France, in order to learn the languages.

In spite of the aspect of the country around Bedford, it appears to have something in its climate which is eminently suitable for weakly Anglo-Indian children—for H. thrived there in an astonishing manner, and finally grew into a huge strong fellow, standing nearly 6 feet 3 inches in height, with a chest over 42 inches, while yet at school.

Moreover, it began to come to my notice that the family passion for sport was coming out very strongly also in my only son, for in spite of his size he had developed into a sprinter, as well as an all-round athlete in almost every branch. He held the silver Championship Cup presented for the best all-round athlete of his school; belonged, as wing, three-quarter to the 1st Fifteen rugby-football team; to the 1st Eight in rowing, and in gymnastics he was the representative for his School at the Public Schools Boxing Competitions at Aldershot; he won the Bedfordshire County Championship Cup and Gold Medal—winning the 100 yards race in  $10\frac{1}{2}$  seconds, and also a large Challenge Cup presented for open competition by the London Athletic Association; then capped the remainder by carrying off the Royal Humane Society Medal presented for competition for all-round aquatic sports.

This is what Bedford, and the Bedford Grammar School in particular, did for a weakling; so if you want to make a man of your son, reader, send him to the B.G.S.

On the other hand, it struck me that there was a great danger of all this turning the head of my son and heir; for a boy under these circumstances, away from his parents for eight or ten years at a time, is very apt to take too rosy a view of life, which might have disastrous results in regard to his future. So, under the circumstances, I thought the soundest way of dealing with the matter would



be to bring the young man out and let him see and judge the circumstances of his parents for himself, and then to trust to his common-sense for the remainder ; for, in my opinion, in such cases no amount of talking across five thousand miles of seas is of any use.

This I did, and H. landed in India in December 1895, at which time I was in charge of the District of Jubbulpore. I was particularly glad to have him out before I retired from official harness, for several reasons, one reason being that I was anxious to teach him the ropes in regard to big-game shooting, while I was in the best position to do so. However, in regard to the latter, I have dealt with the matter elsewhere.

Having given him a good time all round, I then spoke to the young man seriously, and pointed out the fact, which he could now see for himself, that he had been given a good education at considerable sacrifice on the part of his parents, and that it was now high time for him to take a more serious view of life and put his shoulder to the wheel in earnest. To this the lad responded well—and after a strenuous period at his books he passed, by competitive examination, into the gazetted grades of the Indian Police—for I could not afford to send him to Coopers Hill for the Imperial Forest Service.

I was naturally anxious for H. to get an appointment in the Central Provinces Police, as indeed H. was also, so that he might serve midst the scenes and friends of his early childhood where his father had served before him, besides obtaining here the weighty consideration of comparatively good climate at a fair elevation above sea-level. But though H. went up for the C. P. Police examination, and passed *second* on a list of no less than twelve candidates, only one vacancy was given to these competitors : strange to say, the man who took first place has since died.

Subsequently, H.—having passed out this time first on the list in the U. P. examination—accepted an appointment in the United Provinces Police.

I was terribly disappointed and concerned, for even as a little chap he had shown himself almost fatally prone to malaria ; for the greater part of the United Provinces is less than 1,500 feet above the sea-level, consisting as it does of the vast alluvial basin of the rivers Ganges and Jumna.

However, like all young blood, he threw himself headlong into his new-found occupation. Of course, there is practically no big-game shooting in the thousands of square miles of cultivated plains, except in a very few and much monopolized districts on the outlying borders. But there were dacoits, to hunting whom the young man took like a duck to water.

It was now the old tale again. Presuming, on his splendid physique and constitution, he defied the climate and all ordinary precautions; sleeping out in open cow-sheds, or under trees, perhaps in the pouring rain; knocking about all day in the blazing sun; eating and drinking any concoctions he might be able to pick up from the native villagers—and within a couple of years he was again saturated with malaria. His blood being tested then by an expert, it was found that he had contracted the “ringed” malarial parasite, which is the worst of the three possible forms.

Had he been able to listen to advice now and had gone for a change, more serious consequences might have been averted; but H. scoffed at the idea. He was then posted as Superintendent of Police at Agra, which is one of the worst districts for dacoities in India. Here, there being greater scope for action, H. was repeatedly thanked officially for his good work, which was also mentioned at the time in the leading newspapers; but as might have been expected, even his constitution at last gave way under the constant attacks of malarial fever, which had become daily; so he was finally compelled to take leave.

But it was too late to remedy the matter, for an abscess on his liver had already formed. It was now the commencement of the Indian hot season, which rendered an operation here very risky, while at that time in England there was the other extreme of severe cold, so, under advice, H. proceeded to Australia and was operated on there. It was as well that he did this, for after he left I heard of seven liver-abscess patients who were operated on in India, and every one of the seven unfortunates died.

I give the details of his case to show what even a strong athlete may come to from the climate and neglect in India. For two whole months preceding his operation, his temperature rose to 104 degrees every afternoon, sometimes showing a variation of nearly ten degrees within twelve hours.

He was operated on at Sydney by Dr. Clubb, the leading Surgeon, but for whose exceptional skill, my son would undoubtedly have died.

However, as in the case of his father before him, his constitution falsified medical predictions, for he got rid of his hateful tubes from his side after a terrible seven months, and was up and about again, and immediately returned to duty in India, sailing from Sydney within four days of getting rid of the last tube, which of course was very unwise. For a year after the above occurrence, he continued to recover steadily, and finally entirely regained all his former strength and weight. But will young men ever learn sense, even after the most bitter experiences. It seems not. Duties led him again into dacoity work during the hot weather and rains, and down he was again with malaria.

What is bred in the bone seems bound to come out in the blood. There being no other form of excitement in these barren Provinces, as long as there is dacoity work within reach, so long will it be a fatal attraction to all such young men to disregard their health in pursuit of such excitement. What the upshot will be I am afraid to think, for, as I previously remarked, even as a little chap he was almost fatally prone to malaria.

The only remedy would be, either frequent changes out of India or a transfer to a Province at a higher elevation, either of which seem to be equally impossible under our present circumstances.

In the above, I have given the details of two concrete cases, the personal experiences of myself and my son, in order to bring home more forcibly to those young men who think they have the "constitution of a horse," the fact that, however strong they may be, it is impossible for them to take with impunity the same liberties with their health out in India, which they can take at Home.



H. W. H. AND MEN IN CAMP, 1909.





F. C. II IN CAMI

## CHAPTER LII.

### GAME PRESERVATION.

What is the object of "Game Laws"? To preserve game for the purpose of sport ? or to preserve game for the purpose of commerce?

In India, I believe, the law prohibits the export of game from the country, whether in the shape of skins or in any other form. Since game in India is not being preserved for the purpose of commerce, then why not carry the law a step further and absolutely prohibit the *sale* of game in any form, at any place, and at any time?

"Thou shalt NOT SELL NOR BUY Game" is the only law that will ever have a chance of materially effecting the question at issue, especially in a country like India. This is the law in some sixteen States of the Union of America. If such a law can be brought into existence and enforced in an European country where the making of laws is in the hands of the people themselves, where is the difficulty of at least making such a law in India? The mere fact of the existence of such a law would have an enormous effect in checking the wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter of game that is now going on on all sides.

Not only prohibit by law the sale of game in any form, whether in flesh, skins, horns or feather, but also make it a criminal act for any

person to *buy* such. Thus penalize the demand by legislature and the supply will stop as a natural consequence ; for when people are afraid to buy game, to slaughter game then as now will not be worth the powder, shot, time and trouble of those whose trade is to slaughter game in order to sell it.

A local law somewhat to this effect, I believe, was put into effect by the Naini Tal Municipality, with the result that the slaughter and sale of game that had been going on till then immediately stopped in that neighbourhood. If this can be done in one part of India, why can it not be done in other parts also ?

The European sportsman is practically the only one who, in his own interest, is willing to expose the infringements of game laws and this surveillance the new " Shooting Rules " have practically handicapped by their various limitations and restrictions.

The European Forest Official can for the most part only visit each block of forests once a year, and some only, perhaps, once in two or three years, if then. So for the remaining 364 days of the year, at least, the enforcement of the law is entirely in the hands of their subordinate native officials.

As an instance, I will point to the conditions that exist in the locality in which I am at present, as I write, namely, in the Doon and at Mussoorie. With Dehra and Mussoorie within easy reach there is always a very good market for the sale of venison and other game. Consequently the reader may go at almost any time of the year to the Dehra bazaar, and at certain butchers' shops he will be able to buy venison at two annas (2*d.*) a seer, *i.e.*, 1*d.* per lb. ; this, with mutton selling at 5 annas a seer, in itself speaks for the amount of deer that must be slaughtered for this market.

In season and out of season is all the same to the seller as long as he can make it *pay*. The market price for the eggs of domestic fowls in Mussoorie is 9*d.* per dozen ; but pheasant's eggs are sold throughout the "closed" season in Mussoorie at 2*d.* per dozen, being bought up greedily by the bakeries and by unsporting individuals, being so much cheaper than ordinary eggs. I also know of several hotels which maintain a number of professional shikaris, whose profession is to obtain game for their hotels.

In the Eastern Doon, on the road which runs through the heart of the forests between Dehra and Hurdwar, there is a regular system of carrier-ponies maintained by some butchers of Dehra, to obtain and carry in venison, etc., shot by professional poachers in this area. One day I shot a stag cheetle near this road and was seated on the road smoking my pipe waiting for my men to come up, when I saw a native on a pony come galloping down the road towards me, with a network pannier on the pony's back. On reaching me he jumped off his pony and said that he had heard my shot, and wanted to know if I had any venison to *sell* him? I knew this man to be a *kassai* or butcher, but for whom and their game-annihilating trade, I would have had much better sport in these lovely forests than I had had.

The chief suppliers to these butchers, are Goorkhas. Under some clause in the treaty whereby the Doon was ceded by Nepal, all Goorkhas are exempted during the shooting seasons from the operations of the ordinary shooting rules, which by law are binding on all other persons.

Before starting out from Dehra, they usually make arrangements with the butchers in the bazaar for the disposal of their superfluous slain, for which purpose the latter send out men with ponies to accompany them, in order to bring back the meat quickly to the bazaar, where it is sold at two annas a seer, or exchanged, seer for seer, with equal weight in grain.

I once saw a party of forty Goorkhas, nearly all of whom were armed with guns or rifles, at the Raiwalla railway station (now scheduled as "Rikhi-Khesh road"), which is situated in the heart of the Eastern Doon forests. I was camped at the time near a long bit of cultivated land which extended for miles along the edge of the heavy forests, which in consequence had attracted hundreds of animals to the fringe of this forest. I came here for the purpose of taking my pick of the best stags that were to be had among them. But, alas! for my calculations, for these Goorkhas had also discovered the circumstance, and that night the whole of their party sat up in trees along the edge of this forest, about a hundred yards apart, their line extending thus for over a mile.

It was a dark night, for there was no moon, so they could not possibly distinguish a stag from a doe; but nevertheless the whole of



that night they maintained a constant fusillade along their line, some of their bullets actually "pinging" over my tent. I counted over thirty shots before I went to sleep ; how many more shots they had I cannot say.

Next morning I went to look them up to see what they had got ; but except for a few men, and masses of blood in every direction round the spot where they had been camped, there was not a sign of an animal. They had been very quick in cutting up the animals and sending away the meat to the Dehra bazaar on the ponies which had apparently joined them by road. To my query as to why they had selected a dark night instead of a moonlight night, they replied that on moonlight nights there were too many other people out shooting. So the poor beasts have no remission, even on a dark night.

There is also another class of offenders. An officer, a Major by rank, stationed at Dehra, lately told me that he had caught these gentry red-handed in the Eastern Doon, with a line of elephants and no less than 46 slaughtered deer of sorts lying on the ground before them, of which only 7 were stags, and only *one* of these seven that was worth shooting.

I will quote one more example of the morals of this class of people in regard to sport. That is, in regard to their methods of obtaining black partridges.

Their appliances consist of two long nets, each about a hundred yards in length, five or six trained hawks, and eight or ten guns to cover the whole. They find a patch of grass containing a large number of birds, probably decoyed ; they then place one net at the end of this patch of grass, and proceeding to the other end, they drag the grass with the second net, with the line of guns behind, and the trained hawks on the flanks, or hovering in the air, to prevent the unfortunate birds from flying away. The result is that those birds that are not caught in the net are either shot or caught by the hawks, so scarcely a single bird escapes. In this manner they move from patch to patch of grass, over miles of country. What wonder then that the country is becoming fast denuded of game which is being absolutely wiped out in this manner, to be sent off and *sold* either in the bazaars or at the hotels.

This is the class of beings for whom the new game laws now practically reserve a monopoly of the forests, by handicapping the European sportsman—the only man who is willing and able, in his own interests, to bring such atrocious acts to light—were it not that his reports are often completely ignored.

It may be argued that the cases I have mentioned are exceptional, owing to the proximity of two large towns, such as Dehra and Mussoorie. But this is so only in the matter of degree. From my experience as a Forest Officer, I know well that a similar indiscriminate slaughter is going on in a more or less degree according to the circumstances of the demand, probably, in every part of India, even in out-of-the-way places in the jungles from the same cause.

I was camped lately near a group of villages in the heart of a large jungle, and as I could find nothing but does to shoot, I found myself hard pushed for meat for my dogs; so I sent my servant to a butcher whom I had heard of at one of the villages. His reply was that he only killed domestic animals once a week, as it did not pay him to kill more on account of the amount of deer that the local villagers usually shot or trapped. I found the same demand for game to exist all over the Central Provinces and Mysore, no matter how uncivilized or out-of-the-way the places might be. So the same probably applies to every other part of India as well.

Wherever there is a demand there will always be a supply, whether supplied legally or illegally. Penalize the demand by legislature, and the demand will at once greatly decrease if not entirely stop in time, and the supply will stop accordingly, for it will then not be "worth while."

It is of no earthly use to make laws regarding an Act, when that Act, under the unchangeable conditions of the East, can be perpetrated with impunity. Make the Act "not worth while," and it will cease.

When the professional poacher finds, even after heavy preliminary expenses, it is difficult to get anyone to run the risk of the illegal act of buying game from him, by this time he may find that the "game" is not worth the candle.

I will now touch on a few of the points of the new Shooting Rules under section 25 (f) of the Indian Forest Act, VII of 1878, as amended by G. O. No. 441-XIV/31-1906, issued on 2nd August 1906.

Under Rule 2, para. (4), the "spearing and running of deer with dogs" is "absolutely prohibited within a reserved forest." Why? Is not this one of the most manly and healthy forms of sport that it is possible to have anywhere in the world? Healthy, in that in a forest the hunter is obliged to accompany his dogs on his own legs, instead of riding, which is usually impossible in places where deer are found. If the animal bailed up by the dogs proves to be a doe, the hunter can easily whip off his dogs and let the quarry go. This form of sport does not disturb and frighten the animals of the jungles half so much as when they are beaten for by a howling mob of men. Therefore, I would suggest that this para. be expunged altogether, and substituted with: "Driving any kind of deer with men is absolutely prohibited."

Stalking deer, or hunting them with dogs, in my opinion, is the only truly sportsmanlike way of killing deer. In regard to the employment of dogs in this manner, I would also point to Sir Samuel Baker's book, entitled "Rifle and Hound in Ceylon".

Para. 5 of the aforementioned rules also "absolutely prohibits" the "watching in the neighbourhood of water or salt-licks between sunset and sunrise to shoot animals other than carnivora resorting to such places." Now I ask, what on earth is the use of making such a rule which is so absurdly impossible of enforcement, under the conditions that exist in India? I might mention that to the present day, except during the rainy seasons, I spend all my time habitually throughout the year in wandering about in the jungles with my dogs living entirely in tents. Under these circumstances I cannot help seeing a good deal of all the little things that go on in the jungles. I am in the habit of getting up with the cockcrow, and of sallying forth with my rifle in order to pick up, what may be a good stag, very early in the morning just after the break of day. On such occasions it is very rare indeed if I do not come across one or more *fresh* tracks of human footprints along the footpaths in the Government reserve forests. I also often see on such occasions a human form suddenly bolt and vanish into the brushwood like a ghost, on catching sight of me. These are not honest and energetic subordinate forest officials, dear reader, but *poachers*, who have been sitting up all night in the Government "reserved forest" and 'in the neighbourhood of water and salt-licks.'

Last year while camped in the Eastern Doon, I got into friendly conversation with a Goorkha, who in confidence showed me a water-hole in a Government reserved forest, where he said that on the two previous nights he had shot two stag sambar, which he took on carts to Hurdwar, where he obtained Rs. 10 for the flesh of each animal, and Rs. 8 for each of the skins, having been offered Rs. 6 for each of the skins while on his way. On making some tentative enquiries later on, one of the forest subordinates confided to me that this Goorkha had shot only one small stag, the other being a doe.

There is no doubt whatever that this rule is entirely a dead-letter as far as such individuals are concerned, and merely gives them a gratuitous advantage over others who are more conscientious—not that I advocate such poaching dodges by any means. In regard to this rule, such as it is, I would suggest it being altered to : “Watching at night in any manner in reserved forests between sunset and sunrise is absolutely prohibited, except over a live bait for carnivora”; the stipulation of a live bait being present with the watcher would prevent deer coming near him, as well as afford proof of an illegal act in the event of a man being caught in the forests at night without such a bait.

Now a few words in regard to the manner in which these new rules were framed and published. Under the old rules, the three “District” Officers, as differentiated from the more junior District Officers, namely, the District Magistrate, the District Superintendent of Police and the District Forest Officer, were exempted by law from having to take out shooting permits. This was just. I was present at a speech made by Sir Richard Temple, the former Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, in which he put on record that “a Forest Officer, who is not fond of shooting, is not worth his salt.” This is very true, and is equally applicable to the Police Officer, and in a lesser degree to the District Magistrate, whose work is more judicial. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Shikar keeps the District Officer in health ; makes him more contented and happy and less anxious to bolt off on leave on the first opportunity ; it leads him into the most out-of-the-way and otherwise unvisited parts of his district, and so checks many malpractices in those regions ; it makes him hardy, self-reliant and

prompt to act with coolness and courage in cases of emergency ; it brings him in touch with the people and their character, to their mutual better understanding ; it teaches him to shoot quick and straight, frequently a very necessary qualification for a Police Officer ; it teaches him wood-craft and generalship, also very necessary qualifications for Police Officers in India where critical circumstances frequently arise which require great experience, a cool head, and prompt action.

There is nothing in the world that will educate a man in these matters so much, nor develop and perfect the above necessary qualities so well, as the pursuit of sport in the forests ; in fact some of them are impossible to perfect in any other way. Imagine a Police Officer, who knows nothing and cares nothing for sport setting out after dacoits in a jungle country. Having had no experience, he would be unable to use his maps on the ground, and with no knowledge of wood-craft he would be pretty certain to get himself hopelessly lost. At a supreme moment he would not know how to use the natural features of the ground to the best advantage, nor how best to dispose of the men at his command, resulting probably in a hopeless muddle, delay, and the final escape of the dacoits. Not knowing how to shoot quickly in the case of an emergency, he will also probably make an equally hopeless mess of the shooting, if occasion arose. In such a chase he is liable to be led far away into the heart of the forests for weeks at a time, but though game may be crawling around him within easy reach of his gun, being a conscientious man, he has to starve perhaps on dry biscuits, or on the remains of an old goat obtained from some distant village, because the present new Shooting Rules ordain that the Police Officer also must first obtain a 15 days' permit from the Forest Officer before he is allowed to fire a shot in the Government forests of his own district.

This is what the present rules amount to. Why put a District Officer in such a false and humiliating position ? He cannot possibly give the Forest Officer notice as to where his duties may or may not lead him to without a moment's notice. Hitherto the three District Officers mentioned were exempted by the rules from having to take out a permit to shoot in Government forests situated

within their jurisdiction, and this was only just and reasonable in every way, and also to the public interest.

However, under the new rules published in 1906, the District Forest Officer was the *only* district official that was exempted from the rules, though on what principle it is hard to say, for the other two officers hitherto exempted were at least of the same official status and responsibility in the district. But when our law-makers—I refer to the members of the Government Civil Service of India—*included themselves* also under the general ban, it left others little to say on the matter by way of objection, for the reply “have we not subjected ourselves to this law also?” was ready. A good deal was made of it in the papers at the time, that even Commissioners of Divisions had to first obtain shooting permits before they could shoot in a Government forest—and there the matter subsided.

It has now been “subsequently discovered,” hidden away in some Act of Law, that the “District Magistrate” is an *ex-officio* Forest Officer; and as this Act has not been repealed, he is still an exempted person under the new Shooting Rules, in spite of all that was said, done and published broad-cast over the land. But, mind you, this “discovery” is a great secret and must be spoken of only in a whisper, lest people make a fuss.

However, in my own book, I think myself entitled to say that which I consider should be made public, in public interest. So I ask now, why should the District Magistrate be privileged to shoot when, where, and all he likes in the Government forests of his district, when the District Superintendent of Police is not allowed to do so, though his duties entail a great deal more knocking about and roughing out in the district, than do the duties of the District Magistrate? Or, if this may not be granted, why should not the clause, which extends the privilege to the District Magistrate, be also repealed in the same manner in which it was invidiously repealed in the case of the Police Officer who formerly held the same privilege with much greater justification for it.

Again, the District Magistrate gets a large salary and allowances, compared to other officials, and can therefore well afford to pay at least like every one else for the luxury of indulging in sport, for in his case *it is* a luxury, not being a necessity to his

efficiency as a public officer, as it is in the case of a Police Officer. Moreover, the Police Officer gets only about a third, or a quarter of the salary obtained by a District Magistrate, on which he finds it difficult to make both ends meet, with perhaps a wife and family to support. Where then is the justice of exempting the District Magistrate where the public service will gain little or nothing by it, and, on the other hand, make the Police Officer *pay* to make himself an efficient public officer?

There can be no question whatever that all the qualifications of a hardy and experienced sportsman, the knowledge of wood-craft, tactics, strategy, of the native character and language, and of shooting in general, are absolutely essential to the making of an efficient Police Officer in India. It is therefore to the public interest that he should be encouraged and given every facility to make himself an efficient public servant, instead of handicapping him, and putting him in the false and humiliating position that he is in at present, to say nothing of the manner in which this invidious alteration, was effected.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

In cases of excessive preservation of game when carried out by private individuals, those private landowners who wish to preserve their game, should be made to enclose their private forests with a wire-netting fence ten feet in height, in the same manner as is done in the case of deer-forests in England, as an instance of which I would quote Lord Breybrook's deer-forest near Safron Walden, which I remember well when as a boy I lived in that neighbourhood. Thus enclosed, there will be no question as to whom the deer belong, nor any question as to boundaries of the forests owned by respective landowners, who will then not be able to make false claims and illegally bluff sportsmen as sometimes occurs now; nor would the deer then be a nuisance to the adjoining country, nor devastate the fields of the already poor cultivators, and it would also do away with the cause for oppression.

Let the Government reserved forests be the only sanctuaries for game, requiring a written permit on payment for sportsmen to enter and shoot in them. All other forests, private or otherwise, unless fenced round *securely* by a ten-foot wire-netting fence, to be

open to the sporting public, but subject to the Shooting Laws of the State with reference to the shooting of females, etc., watching at night etc., etc., and with reference to the sale and purchase of game in any form should such a law be brought into existence.

The Magistrate of each district should be instructed to submit a monthly statement to Government showing the localities within his charge, whether belonging to Government or to private land-owners, where it would be in the interest of the public, whether sporting or private, to reduce the stock of wild game for the time being. These returns should be published monthly, not only in the Government Gazette, for few people see that, but in the leading newspapers, with an invitation to sportsmen to proceed to those places named in the list. In this way the excessive increase of game in any one locality could be kept within bounds, without imposing any hardships on any person or class of person.

It might be argued that few District Magistrates would be willing to "give away" the conditions of sport in their own districts. To this I can only say that they should be reminded that they are the servants of the public.

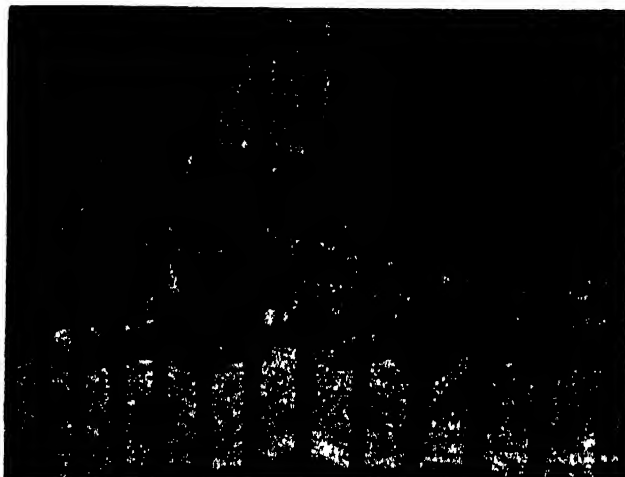
There is also another remark which I should like to make with reference to the printed shooting permits that are issued by Divisional Forest Officers. At present these permits are required to be returned to the D. F. O., with a remark thereon stating the number and kind of animals that have been shot by the holder. Regarding this I would suggest that the holder be also requested to reply in writing to a small list of questions to the effect of: "Have you at any time while in these forests noticed any indications of illegal poaching, such as the firing of guns at night time in the reserve forests, unaccounted for blood-tracks, the remains of *machans* in trees, *patwas* or other clearings on the ground, fresh human foot-prints in these forests very early in the morning which the forest subordinate officials cannot account for? etc., etc."; "which kinds of game are most numerous in these forests"; "which kinds of game in your opinion are unduly deficient in numbers, and to what do you attribute the cause?"

When such reports of a successive number of sportsmen agree on a certain point, it should be accepted conclusively as independent



and corroborated evidence, and the matter should be dealt with accordingly, and suitable measures taken without delay to remedy the matter, the subordinate forest officials in immediate charge being severely punished if this evidence proves that illegal poaching is undoubtedly going on.

Also, the money now being obtained from the public in payment for shooting permits, should be expended in small rewards being offered for every class of vermin, including hawks, pine-martins, etc., etc., and the rewards for tigers be abolished, and those for panthers, pantherets, and wild-dogs increased to at least double the amount offered at present.



A MAN-EATING TIGRESS

## CHAPTER LIII.

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### NOTES ON MAN-EATERS.

Most people have probably noticed the unusual nervous anxiety displayed by the mother of a newly-born litter of pups, who growls and bares her teeth on the approach of every stranger, whether dog or man, who appears to be fidgety even in the presence of a person whom she knows to be a friend. Even the father of the pups seems to be aware of this jealousy or nervousness, as the case may be, on the part of the mother, and does his best in consequence to studiously avoid coming in contact with any of the precious pups when they are in the crawling or toddling stage, growling at, and even running away from them, should any of them accidentally come near him at this period. But as soon as the pups are some six months old and are able to run about all over the place more or less independently, their mother's jealousy and anxiety in regard to them appears to subside ; while now, their father, who has hitherto avoided them, welcomes a frolic with them, even appearing to take a pride in them, as he frequently licks and caresses them.

The above remarks appear to apply in every way to tigers also, for I have never seen or heard of a true case of a full-grown male

tiger being found in the company of a tigress who had cubs that were under six months old. Personally, I have repeatedly found both the father and mother together when the cubs were the size of a Newfoundland dog, *i.e.*, about nine months old, but never when the cubs were younger than that.

The old gentleman seems to be perfectly well aware that his mate will not be in a fit state of mind to live with until her precious cubs are sufficiently well on their legs to be able to flee into hiding, while their mother held a possible enemy in check while they did so, whether that enemy be himself, in a temporary fit of rage, or some other creature. So when the time for the birth of the cubs approaches, the mother and father invariably part company as if by mutual consent until the cubs are some six to nine months old.

During this interval the tigress will have to depend entirely on herself in every way, including a possible encounter with some foe. She knows instinctively that she cannot afford to run the risk of being found in a place by a stronger foe when her cubs were in their helpless stage. While all the best forests are, of course, monopolized by the strongest male tigers, who are only too ready, with an eye to the future, to kill every male cub they find that is not a progeny of their own.

It is for reasons such as the above that tigresses, when about to have cubs, are frequently driven to resort to most unexpected places, such as deserted mines, temples, caves, sugar-cane fields, etc., but wherever it be, it will always be somewhere where there is the least likelihood of any other tiger being found; which, in a tiger country, will only be because such a locality has either insufficient cover or an insufficient food-supply.

If their natural food in such places is insufficient, the tigress soon makes her presence conspicuous by the persistent toll which she must levy among the domestic cattle of the neighbourhood; and, if denied even cattle, rather than let her helpless cubs starve, which they must if she starves, she is compelled to turn into a man-eater pure and simple, until such a time as when her cubs are old enough to travel to a better locality. Here is one of the causes of man-eaters; which is also the probable origin of the ancient legend of "the King and his people propitiating the irate dragon with gifts of cattle, etc.

As soon as the necessity for the killing of human beings ceases, other and more natural food being available, I am of the opinion that such tigers cease to be man-eaters, which probably accounts for, as frequently occurs, the sudden disappearance of a man-eater from certain localities, such man-eaters having merely reverted to their ordinary food elsewhere as soon as they were in a position to do so.

On the other hand, a tigress who has once been driven by necessity in this manner to the discovery of the facility with which the much-dreaded man may be killed, is very apt to again revert to man-killing whenever the necessity for it again arises, such as with the failing of her physical powers due to the advance of age, the decay of broken teeth or perhaps some gun-shot wound that maims and incapacitates her from capturing ordinary wild animals. Hence we have the origin of the reason why it is that man-eaters are almost invariably females, the cause being traced back to the habit which they have probably acquired by the necessity entailed by the peculiarity they have displayed in the selection of the birthplace of some one of their litters in the past. This, I consider to be the one and only reason for the undoubted predominance of females among man-eaters.

In regard to the occasional males among man-eaters, they probably first learn the trick from a female who has already acquired the habit in the manner already detailed. But he will not take to it habitually until necessity also compels him to it, such as the loss of natural powers due to old age, etc.

On the other hand, there are also other causes : in times of famine, when the water-supply of the country has contracted to a few well-known pools of water, the stock of wild animals of the whole countryside, perhaps of several hundred square miles, is often practically wiped out by native pot-hunters sitting up at nights over these only pools of water at which these unfortunate animals can assuage their thirst ; for not only do these conditions lend themselves fatally to their destruction, but the very fact of the general famine makes their human foes more keen and active in taking advantage of these conditions and so obtain food which they find difficult to obtain in any other way. The result of this sudden destruction of wild animals is that the tigers are left face to face with starvation quite unexpectedly, while the generally waterless state of the country at the time, equally precludes any

attempt on their part to migrate ; and the result of such a sudden and unexpected change in natural conditions is easy to conjecture : after perhaps a week's starvation, the tigers would be driven by the tortures of hunger to desperation and would kill and eat the first living thing of flesh and blood that crossed their path, be it a man or not. And having done this a few times, with the knowledge of the ease with which they can be killed, their natural fear of man becomes somewhat dulled, and the habit of killing him may become confirmed at some future time.

When the famine is over, and wild animals again drift over the country, I think that the majority of such man-eaters give up killing men and return to their natural food ; for even confirmed man-eaters never entirely get rid of a certain vague fear of man, even though they have found out his weakness and the ease with which he can be killed.

But though such tigers may thus relinquish the killing of human beings, they are liable to return to it again at some future date, when circumstances, such as old age or weakness from a wound occur, which preclude the capturing of their natural food.

Wherever a man-killer is destroyed, the killing of men usually stops at once. But in many parts of India it is an actual and well-known fact that in such localities, after an interval of a few years, the epidemic of man-killing breaks out afresh. I know of my own knowledge certain localities which have for the past fifty years been notorious for these periodical outbreaks of man-killing.

The culprits in such cases are undoubtedly the mate or progeny of the former man-killer, whose acquirement in the past has been lying dormant, until the time when a necessity arises which prompts them to make use of it. May be, the mate of the former man-killer has hitherto been strong and active enough to supply its own wants from the game of the country ; but after a few years he perhaps feels the infirmities of old age creeping on, or the effects of some wound ; and finds that he is no longer active enough to catch wild animals. Thus prompted by hunger, he recalls the methods of his former mate, and so a recurrence of man-killing takes place in the same locality after a lapse of a few years. Such a beast, being





prompted to it by some physical infirmity, becomes a persistent and inveterate man-killer for the remainder of his days.

On the other hand, in localities where periodical man-killing breaks out and then suddenly ceases again of its own accord, such cases are entirely due to the temporary necessities of some tigress who has selected that locality as the safest place in which to have a litter of cubs ; probably because the adjoining forests held too many other tigers for her to run the risk of having her cubs there. Such a tigress, if in her prime, when her cubs are big enough to travel, returns to the larger forests where there is a better game-supply, and, in consequence of finding plenty of game on which to feed, she probably ceases to kill men, until such a time when she might revisit the same locality under similar circumstances, or when driven to it by necessity arising from other causes. Hence we have the mysterious cessations and recurrences of man-killing in certain localities in India, even though the man-killer in such cases may never be brought to book. In such cases it is generally argued that the beast " must have been killed somehow," but the above is my opinion.

Wherever there are most tigers to a given area of forests, there the tigresses are most liable to be crowded out during their breeding period when they particularly wish to be alone, and are thus forced to resort to outlying localities, where there are no other tigers, for the simple reason probably because the supply of their ordinary food there is insufficient, the consequence of which can easily be imagined—man-killing.

For instance, there used to be, if there are not still, a great number of tigers about the rivers Tawa and Moran, in the Hoshungabad District of the Central Provinces. Near the Tawa river, at Bagra, there were the deserted shafts of extensive silver mines of the olden days. The stock of wild game in the neighbourhood of these mines is very limited ; but, in spite of this latter fact, these old mines were the favourite resorts of tigresses when they were about to give birth to cubs. The same is the case of Chandni-kho or the old silver mines in the neighbourhood of Chopna, some forty miles from Bagra.

The consequence is, that for the last fifty years at least, to my own knowledge, both Bagra and Chopna have been notorious for



periodical outbreaks of man-killing which usually stop from time to time as suddenly and unaccountably as they started. These are merely temporary man-killing tigresses.

But occasionally a confirmed and persistent man-killer appears, whose ravages cease only with his death. This is either a former man-killing tigress or a former companion of a man-killer, either its mate or one of its progeny, who in turn is being driven to man-killing by some necessity such as that from weakness or old age, or some particular physical infirmity due perhaps to some wound or to disease. Such a beast is indeed a terrible scourge to a country.

But even confirmed man-killers never lose their instinct which prompts all wild animals to fear the lords of creation, for man-killers will very rarely indeed, if ever *openly* challenge a human being face to face during sunlight, when their usual method is to pounce unawares on to the last man of a party, and whip him off out of sight before his companions have realized what has happened. They make open and persistent demonstrations as a rule, only after sundown at night, or early in the morning before the sun is fairly up in the skies.

It is this very fear that makes them exercise that cunning which has become proverbial of man-eaters. There is no doubt that they are perfectly conscious that their depredations among human beings is likely to bring on them a combined retaliation. Tigers themselves frequently combine to attack a large bison or buffalo; and many other animals, such as monkeys, jungle-dogs, etc., do the same on occasions. So tigers are perfectly well aware of the meaning of combination, and their instinct warns them that this is what they have particularly to dread on the part of those otherwise weak, two-legged creatures, who, though they can be killed so easily, yet inspire such a mysterious and unaccountable dread.

It is undoubtedly also this fear which makes all man-eaters such prodigious travellers. Man-eaters have been known to travel straight away for forty miles in one night after having killed a man, while on such occasions it is common occurrence for them to travel twenty miles. Other tigers never behave like this; so there must be some particular motive in man-eaters doing so. In my opinion,





it is the fear of a combined retaliation on the part of human beings that prompts man-eaters to place in this manner as much distance as possible between themselves and the scene of their last exploit, in fact a case of guilty conscience, pure and simple.

It is this that makes the quest of a man-eater so very difficult and uncertain. The only remedy in such cases is to try and intercept them. Thus, if a party of six sportsmen were to set out after a man-eater that has a beat of thirty miles, their best plan would be to divide their forces into three portions of two sportsmen in each, one party of two taking up a position in about the centre of the beat, while the remaining two parties took up posts on either side towards the extremities of the beat.

It appears to be only the guilty conscience of having killed the superior being man, that prompts them generally to travel so far, for I have frequently noticed that they do not usually do so when they have only killed an animal. While it is a great mistake to think that man-eaters will kill and eat nothing but human flesh, for in that case they would very soon starve, or the very excess of their depredations would bring a swift retribution. A man-killer might not be able to capture a wild animal with ease, but, if it comes across a fat juicy young buffalo tied helplessly by the leg and at its mercy in a lonely spot in the jungles, the usually hungry man-eater is pretty certain to kill it. And now, having no prickings of conscience prompting it to take a twenty-mile journey, the tiger is more liable to remain by its kill on the following day and so give the sportsman, who has thus smartly intercepted it, his chance.

In any case, "sitting-tight" is the only method that offers a single sportsman any hope of final success. A stern chase after a man-eater is apt to be endless; but, if you sit tight in one place within the beat, the tiger is bound to come round to you within at most ten or fifteen days. But this is my sermon in regard to every class of tiger.

The longer immunity a man-eater has, the more daring and callous it becomes, and the more liable, in consequence, to commit some indiscretion which will lead to its final undoing.

There are two distinct methods whereby tigers perform the actual capture of their prey. At the end of the preliminary crawl or stalk, they either pounce with one spring straight on top of the animal, if it

is near enough, or, if the animal is out of the reach of a single spring, they rush out after it, but rarely pursue it for more than about forty yards. If the tiger comes up with the fleeing animal, he springs on to it, and simultaneously fixing one paw on to the shoulder, his fangs in the back of the neck, with the other forepaw hooked round the nose of the animal, he draws the nose inwards, so that the neck is bent round in a curve. In the meanwhile, the tiger's hind feet are employed in tripping up the legs of the animal. These actions, with the combined impetus and weight of both animals, acting in the same direction, bring the whole mass down with a tremendous force on to the already bent neck of the animal, whose nose and head being bent inwards strike the ground obliquely, and so become doubled up under pressure of this enormous impetus and double weight. The result of this is obvious ; the vertebræ of the neck is instantly snapped.

Thus the tiger utilizes (probably in preference to any other way) the weight and impetus of the animal itself, combined with that of its own, to kill the animal in a manner that entails comparatively little exertion on the part of the tiger.

In my opinion this is the most common manner in which tigers kill their prey. For their own natural effluvia, and the keen powers of scent with which most wild animals (except tigers) are gifted, must make it difficult for them to approach close enough to capture their prey at a single spring. Probably, for every one animal which they are able to pounce upon unawares, they have to chase at least two before they capture them.

But in order to chase and capture wild animals in the manner described, the tiger must possess a considerable amount of agile activity. Thus a tiger, who, from some cause, has lost his powers of activity, would be able to obtain only the one animal on which he is able to pounce unawares at a single spring, in the place of three animals, so that, though he may not altogether actually starve, he has to go hungry in the place of the two animals whom he is unable to capture by chasing them, unless he takes to some extraordinary means, such as man-killing, whereby to supplement the deficiency.

Hence, in almost every case of confirmed (as opposed to temporary) man-killers, that is, of felines that persist in killing and eating human

beings on each and every opportunity as long as they live, the cause is generally due to the loss of activity, due to some physical infirmity, even though the latter may not be palpable to the eye, for it may be caused by such ailments as rheumatism, lumbago, kidney-disease, etc., etc., or to old age.

If due to old age, the fact will be indicated at once by the condition of the tiger's teeth, which will be, either much worn down, broken, decayed, or partially or altogether wanting, and always very dirty in an old tiger, which are very different to the firm and beautifully white teeth of a tiger that is young or in his prime, while a tiger that had bad or painful teeth, would naturally prefer the tender flesh of a man, to that of a tougher animal.

Again, tigers sometimes spring by mistake on to a porcupine, thinking it is a pig, and the results are disastrous to the tiger ; for the quills pierce through and through the paws of the tiger, and into his chest and neck, working their way in under the skin, at the latter places, where they rot and cause festering abscesses. While of the quills in his paws, the stupid beast for some unaccountable reason, gnaws off only the protruding ends, leaving the remainder to decompose with the heat of his body. The result is that, in a very short time, his feet are in a putrid and festering state. I once shot a tiger in this condition, in company with my old friend W. K. in the Betul District. It was pitiful to see the distress of the huge beast as he hobbled painfully along towards us, halting every few yards to sit on his haunches in order to ease the excruciating pain he was suffering in his poor old sore toes in front. When we had put him out of pain, we found that both his forefeet were perfectly rotten, with the remains of several porcupine quills in each, the ends of which he had gnawed off ; while buried under the skin about his neck and chest, were other quills, half rotted by the heat of his body. This tiger must have been starving, for his stomach was quite empty. So he would probably have killed the first living thing of flesh and blood, whether man or beast, that came within his reach while he was in this condition.

Male tigers usually fight among themselves for the favours of the female, so that in such contests only the fittest survive ; therefore a male man-killer, being debarred from taking part in such contests

by the physical infirmity that has made him take to killing and eating men, is generally found *alone* at all times.

But not so with a man-killing tigress, who may not have lost her attractions, which will be as long as she is capable of breeding. Her own individual infirmity during her periods of solitude will confirm her in the habit of man-killing which, being confirmed, she will still continue to practise even when she has the company of a mate, or that of her, perhaps fully grown, cubs. Thus we frequently find several tigers in the company of a confirmed man-killing tigress, perhaps a large male and three nearly full-grown cubs. Such companions, however, never appear to take an active part in the actual killing of human beings, though they invariably partake in the subsequent repast therefrom. They also accompany the man-killer in the long journey which usually follows such exploits, apparently being great admirers of the perpetrator of the exploits which they themselves dare not imitate. Hence, the actual man-killer, of every such party of man-eaters, is almost invariably a female.

*A propos* of the manner in which tigers kill their prey, I do not mean to imply that the tiger executes any conscious scheme of attack. When a man on a road tries to stop a runaway horse, his natural impulse, done at the moment without any conscious scheme is to seize the horse by the bit and turn its head, and the head being turned from the direction of its bodily impetus, the horse can no longer see where it is going. The tiger merely does the same thing quite unconsciously when he hooks a paw round the nose of the runaway animal in order to stop it. But, whether by design or accident, the result of tripping the beast on to its bent neck in this manner is the same.

But there is a vast difference in the behaviour on such occasions between an active and fleet wild animal and the comparatively slow and lumbering domestic cattle from which sportsmen chiefly derive their knowledge of the manner in which tigers kill their prey.

A domestic cow, on finding itself suddenly face to face with a tiger crouching on the ground before her, is instinctively aware of its own physical incapacity to escape, and is thus apt to stand quite still as if fascinated, which in reality it is, in view of this instinctive knowledge. The tiger at a glance, from the physical aspect of the

beast, also knows that there is no possibility of its escape ; so he goes quietly up and seizes it by the throat and pins it to the ground when it may, or may not, break its neck.

When a "kill" is tied securely by the leg in a lonely spot to be killed by a tiger, the tiger knows at a glance that the beast has no possibility of escape from him. On such occasions the tiger frequently walks callously round and round the bait with his tail stuck stiffly in the air on a tour of inspection, before he kills it. He then suddenly dips his head, and seizes the unfortunate animal by the throat and pins it to the ground, when, as already stated, the neck may, or may not, be broken when the remainder of the body falls.

Various animals sometimes require a variation in the manner in which they can be most easily killed. For instance, a tiger would make little impression by springing on to the back of a tough old boar, while in doing so he would run the risk of receiving a fatal gash himself from the boar's tusks. In such cases I have little doubt that the tiger first entices the boar to charge, and having knocked him over on his back by a clout across his head, immediately springs on to his throat and pins him down to the ground, until the life is choked out of him.

Long-horned animals, such as full-grown buffaloes, etc., preclude success in a spring on to their backs. In such cases, the tiger usually rushes after them and breaks their hind legs ; after which the tiger seizes them by the throat and kills them. Such attacks are usually carried out by two or more tigers, of whom one may engage the attention of the victim from in front, should it show fight, while a second tiger creeps round and attacks it in the rear, breaking one or both of its hind legs, when they have it at their mercy.

I have already pointed out that it does not follow that a *man-eater* is a *man-killer*, though the latter is the sense in which the word "man-eater" is generally used. I have shot a considerable number of man-eaters, but comparatively few man-killers. So it would be more correct and to the point to use the term "*man-killer*," when we wish to denote such an animal, as differentiated from ordinary "*man-eaters*" who merely accompany a man-killing beast.

No method can be too unsportsmanlike when employed for the destruction of both "*man-killers*" and "*man-eaters*", for even the



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beast, also knows that there is no possibility of its escape ; so he goes quietly up and seizes it by the throat and pins it to the ground when it may, or may not, break its neck.

When a "kill" is tied securely by the leg in a lonely spot to be killed by a tiger, the tiger knows at a glance that the beast has no possibility of escape from him. On such occasions the tiger frequently walks callously round and round the bait with his tail stuck stiffly in the air on a tour of inspection, before he kills it. He then suddenly dips his head, and seizes the unfortunate animal by the throat and pins it to the ground, when, as already stated, the neck may, or may not, be broken when the remainder of the body falls.

Various animals sometimes require a variation in the manner in which they can be most easily killed. For instance, a tiger would make little impression by springing on to the back of a tough old boar, while in doing so he would run the risk of receiving a fatal gash himself from the boar's tusks. In such cases I have little doubt that the tiger first entices the boar to charge, and having knocked him over on his back by a clout across his head, immediately springs on to his throat and pins him down to the ground, until the life is choked out of him.

Long-horned animals, such as full-grown buffaloes, etc., preclude success in a spring on to their backs. In such cases, the tiger usually rushes after them and breaks their hind legs ; after which the tiger seizes them by the throat and kills them. Such attacks are usually carried out by two or more tigers, of whom one may engage the attention of the victim from in front, should it show fight, while a second tiger creeps round and attacks it in the rear, breaking one or both of its hind legs, when they have it at their mercy.

I have already pointed out that it does not follow that a *man-eater* is a *man-killer*, though the latter is the sense in which the word "man-eater" is generally used. I have shot a considerable number of man-eaters, but comparatively few man-killers. So it would be more correct and to the point to use the term "*man-killer*," when we wish to denote such an animal, as differentiated from ordinary "man-eaters" who merely accompany a man-killing beast.

No method can be too unsportsmanlike when employed for the destruction of both "*man-killers*" and "*man-eaters*", for even the

latter are potential "man-killers" who are tolerably certain to become the scourge of the country-side at some future date.

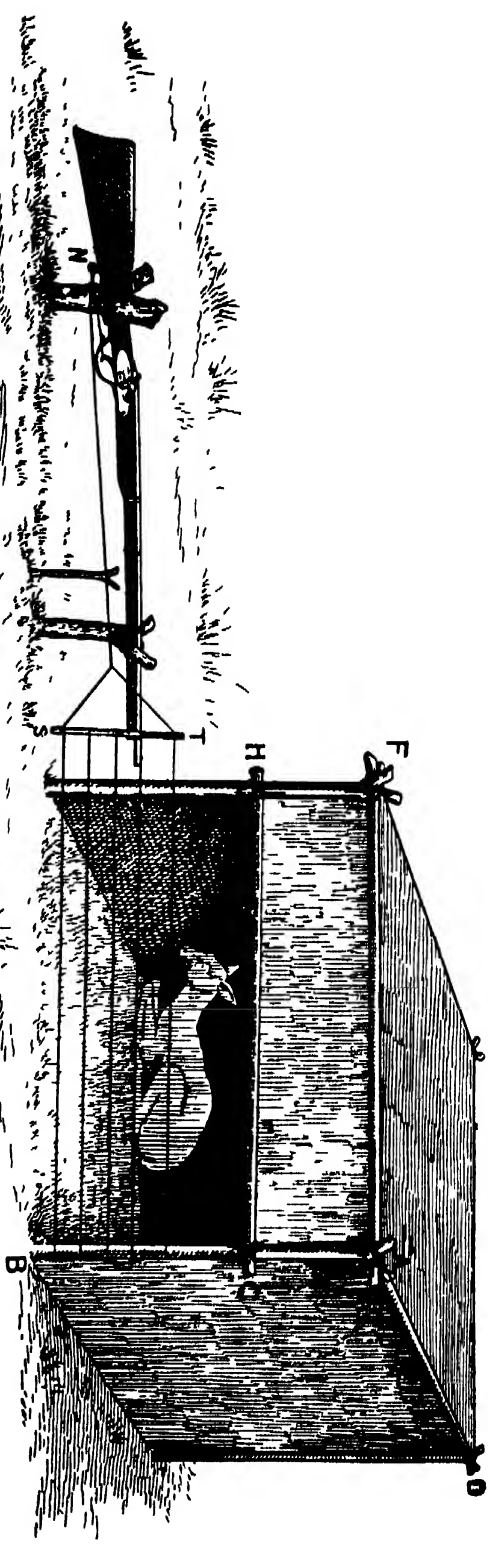
In the accompanying is a rough plan or frame only of a gun-trap which sometimes answers for the purpose. I have merely given a rough *plan* of the construction to show the idea. Its walls should be made of stout saplings, side by side, touching each other, fixed *very* firmly some three feet or more in the ground, with a very strong roof of similar poles side by side. There should be cross-bars six inches apart *over* the whole structure, both over the roof and side walls, and the whole should be interwoven with bambu or other rope. When complete, it should be strong enough to almost bear an elephant sitting on the top of it without giving way at any point. It should be in the form of a box with about two-thirds of the lower portion of the whole of one side knocked out, or like an open shed with a third of the upper portion of the open side filled up.

For a tiger this cage should be of the following dimensions : height (A to B) 5 feet ; depth (A to D) 9 feet ; front-length (A to F) 6 to 9 feet, longer the better ; height of aperture (C to B) 3 feet ; length of aperture (C to H) the whole length of 6 or 9 feet.

The bait should be tied as far back within the cage as possible, and the reason for making the latter so deep as 9 feet is that otherwise the buff would be too close to the door and so tempt the feline to put in only its arm to pull it out. This occurred once in my experience, on which occasion the man-eater went off with merely a broken arm

The string should be some strong and thin *dark*-coloured twine—a strong fishing-line would do very well. It should be as taut as possible without the risk of firing the gun of its own accord and should be passed round a smooth wire nail (N) in the rear peg and then tied firmly with wax to the trigger, as shown in the accompanying sketch. The lowest string should be within about two inches of the floor, or the feline, who usually crawls in, is apt to get its nose underneath the string.

For a panther the cage should be only three feet high, and the aperture only two feet high ; all the other dimensions of the cage should be the same as for the tiger. It does not matter how *long* the aperture is for the gun commands the whole length, while the





longer it is the more the bait is exposed to view and more confidence will the feline have in entering it.

The bait for a tiger should be a young buffalo, and for a panther a goat or a small pig.

Instead of passing the end of the string round the nail, a peg may be put into the ground level with the trigger ; a cross stick may then be secured on the peg with one end of the cross resting on the trigger, with the other end of the cross tied to the end of the string. Any pressure on the string will lever the cross-stick on to the trigger, and so cause it to go off.

When these arrangements have been completed, an equally strong, though much smaller, cage should be built in the same manner over the whole of the gun, in order to protect it and the string from any possibility of contact with the feline as it crawls about over and around it, as they always do before entering the trap.

When everything is ready, the whole, the gun-cage and bait-cage should be covered completely over with thorns to a depth of some five feet, and should overhang the upper portion of the front side, making the whole look like a large hollow, or caved bush. The string at the entrance of this cave may be cunningly concealed in part by inserting sprigs of grass into the ground. The whole is then complete. But remember that the feline invariably do their uttermost first to find some other opening, jumping about on the roof and trying to tear a way through. If the gun is not sufficiently protected during these performances, it is certain to go off before it is required to.

A suitable locality should always be chosen for the cage, such as a cross-road or river-bed usually promenaded by the feline.

On one occasion we were much puzzled to find in the morning that the gun had gone off during the night without any apparent cause, until I suddenly remembered that we had had a shower of rain during the night, which, of course, had tightened the string so much that it caused the gun to go off. Even a heavy dew is apt to do this, so a water-proof fishing-line should be used, or the string should be well waxed.

On another occasion, when the trap had been made close to our camp, we were surprised to hear the gun go off before we had been

back in camp half-an-hour. On proceeding to investigate, we found master piggy, the bait, shot through the head. He had gnawed through his rope and proceeded to walk out of the door, and so shot himself. *Moral*.—Always tie the bait so securely that he will not be able to break loose and shoot himself. Read, mark and learn! Lastly, never load the gun until the very last moment and then be very, very careful how you cock the triggers, or they will go off. On no account whatever allow any one to touch the trap after the triggers of the gun have been cocked, or to pass in front of the loaded and cocked gun. Read, mark, and learn again!

## CHAPTER LIV.

### RIFLES FOR DANGEROUS GAME IN INDIAN FORESTS.

In the following disquisition I must ask my reader to bear in mind that I am dealing with the question of shooting in *dense* forests, where, if the game is not actually disabled, you may never again come up with it, though it may eventually die a miserable and lingering death.

Apart from the danger which attends the following up of dangerous wounded game, the external wound made by even a large surfaced bullet frequently becomes plugged, either by a fid of surface fat or by some portion of the internals such as a part of the entrails ; or by the wounded animal deliberately rolling in and plastering the wound over with a thick coating of mud from the edge of some pool which will dry in a few minutes in a hot sun, forming thus a very serviceable bandage or plaster over the wound, held firmly by the hair on either side to which it has dried. This habit of "plastering" their wounds in this manner is done habitually and instinctively by all animals on the very first opportunity, not only in order to thus staunch their loss of blood, but also to escape the greater danger of flies getting at the wound and laying their maggots therein ; it is as much for this reason that all wild animals, when wounded, usually make for the nearest water as soon as possible, as to assuage their increased thirst. Thus even a blood-trail is not to be relied on for the recovery of a wounded animal in dense forests.

A large striking-surfaced bullet of course makes a much larger external wound, and therefore affords a much greater chance of leaving a serviceable blood-trail ; but a small striking-surfaced bullet, however much body and weight it may have behind that surface, and however big a hole it may make *inside* the animal, the fact remains that, on *entering* the body, it makes an external (blood-letting) wound corresponding to its *small* striking-surface, which will be at once closed up by the surface fat, and will then leave little or no blood-trail.



For shooting in open country, such as at antelope, a small striking-surfaced bullet may be permissible, for here we can *see* where the wounded animal goes and can re-stalk it or ride it down ; but in dense forests this is impossible, for which reason alone a small striking-surfaced elongated bullet should not be used here, let alone its other disqualifying attributes, which will be mentioned later.

Again, most sportsmen will have observed the curious phenomenon that subsequent shots on an already wounded animal, however well placed, have much less effect than similar shots on an unwounded animal. The theory regarding this appears to be that, on being struck by the first bullet, the nervous energy of the system is so completely directed and concentrated on the locality of the first wound that subsequent wounds fall as it were on dead flesh ; the only effect that a fresh wound seems to have (but not till after a perceptible pause) is to draw some of the hitherto concentrated nervous energy away to the new wound and so redistribute it, with the result, that instead of feeling worse for the fresh wound, the animal appears to be galvanized into fresh life and activity on the principle apparently of "counter-irritants," such as a mustard plaster, drawing away pain from a certain point of concentration and making the patient feel better in consequence. The result of shooting in such cases is, that, if we kill at all, we are reduced to ignominiously kill the animal piecemeal, limb by limb, which, to say the least of it, is not sport, whatever the effect may be on our pride.

It will now be seen how much depends on the correct placing of the *first* bullet in dense forest-shooting. It therefore follows that a bullet should not be fired here except at a distance which is close enough to enable us to place it, with a reasonable amount of certainty, on the spot where we wish to place it, which I maintain cannot be done at a moving animal beyond 75 yards, nor at a standing animal beyond the "point-blank" range of the fire-arm, on account (in the latter case) of the impossibility of always correctly judging the distance in the usually difficult circumstances of sport, while I define the "point-blank" range of a weapon as the distance to which its bullet will travel, without at any time rising more than about an inch above or below the "line of sight"—which, in a slightly rifled 12-gauge bore shooting 6 drams of black powder, is about 100 yards.

If reliable statistics could be obtained regarding the distances at which forest big-game are killed, probably three-fourths would be found to have been first struck at ranges under 75 yards and more than half under 50 yards, while very few indeed have been retrieved after being struck at over 100 yards.

Thus to habitually shoot at such game at much longer ranges is in most cases to perhaps condemn them to a miserable and painful death, which is not only unsportsmanlike but inhuman. So we are forced to the conclusion that in dense cover, where it is impossible to successfully stalk or ride down a wounded animal that is not actually disabled, the only humane and sportsmanlike ranges at which an animal may be fired at are—moving animals not beyond about 75 yards, and at standing animals not much beyond the “point-blank” range of the weapon used, nor in any case beyond at most 125 yards, beyond which no one could be certain, under ordinary sporting conditions, of hitting a small vital spot.

Thus we have no concern here with shooting at ranges beyond 125 yards, so the merits of various kinds of rifles that give us this required amount of flatness of trajectory will have to be judged on other qualifications.

Let us first consider the question from the practical and common-sense point of view as differentiated from theories.

Which would administer the greatest “shock” or knock-down blow to the system of a man: a thrust through his chest with a foil or a blow on the chest with a sledge-hammer or a crow-bar? Which would stop a Ghazi's rush better at ten yards: a badly-placed Mauser pistol bullet, or a hefty brick hurled into his bread-basket? Why does a 10-bore bullet, fired through a pane of glass, only make a small, neat hole, the size of itself, without breaking the remainder of the glass, when, if the same bullet is thrown at it by hand, it will shatter the *whole* structure?

There is no refutation to these hard facts. But what is the reason?

The *sharp* point of the foil meets with no “resistance” while the blunter-surfaced sledge-hammer meets with considerable “resistance,” hence the “shock”.

The excessive velocity of the 10-bore bullet when fired overcomes the “resistance” *too quickly*, while its slower velocity when

thrown by hand meets with greater "resistance" and so enables the "shock" or concussion to travel from the point of contact to every part of the system.

The excessive velocity of the Mauser bullet also overcame the "resistance" too quickly, while the larger striking-surface and slower velocity of the brick met with greater "resistance," and thus administered the greater "shock" or knock-down blow to the system.

The small bullet *may* do more permanent injury, from which the individual struck may die afterwards, but we are not concerned with what may happen to the animal *afterwards*, when we are trying to stop the charge of an infuriated beast—it is the "brick" principle that we require now—the blunt, "resistance-creating" and "shock-giving" projectile which will floor the charging animal; which, as has already been shown, cannot be obtained by either a *sharp* or *small* breaking-surfaced projectile, or by a velocity that overcomes the "resistance" *too* quickly. Regarding the latter, however, I will have more to say later.

The term "shock," as applied in sport, is often very imperfectly understood. There cannot be "shock" without mutual "resistance". If you were to run your head against a wall made of a sheet of paper, you would meet with no "resistance" and consequently no "shock"; but, if the wall is of solid masonry, there will be considerable "resistance" and consequently "shock," not only to your head but throughout your entire system. When two trains, travelling at a high speed, collide, there is great mutual "resistance" and consequently "shock," not only at the point of contact, but throughout the entire system of the whole train so that the guard in the rear of the train may be killed by the "shock," though he may be as much as 200 yards away from the point of contact. On the other hand, if the train were to run into only a trolley standing on the line, the trolley affords practically no "resistance" to the superior weight and velocity of the train, so that the latter would feel little or no shock, while probably the light trolley would be merely brushed out of the way by the cow-catcher with perhaps little material damage done to it; though, had the trolley also been travelling at a high rate of speed, it would have afforded a much greater "resistance" and consequently more "shock" to both the train and itself.

However, the following example will perhaps enable us to arrive at a better understanding of the principle as applied in shooting, so I will crave the reader's patience a little longer in bearing with these "illustrations".

Let us suppose that we have a large wooden door some six inches in thickness, which is locked on one side, and we desire to cause this lock to fly open by means of the concussion or "shock" of a blow administered on the *centre* of the door. If we take a .303 rifle and fire a bullet at the centre of the door, we will find that it has merely drilled a small neat hole through the door, without having shaken the remainder of the structure in the least. If we fire a spherical cannon-ball at the same spot, the result is the same, except that the ball has made a larger hole through the door and has shaken the remainder of the structure somewhat more though not sufficiently for these vibrations to be strong or intense enough to burst the lock, because the velocity of even the larger-surfaced ball was too great to enable the door to afford the requisite amount of "resistance". If, however, we use a battering-ram with the same hemispherical striking-surface as the cannon-ball, but propelled at much *slower* velocity by the hands of some twelve men, the door is now able to put up the required amount of "resistance," with the result now, that though the door is struck in the centre, the "shock" or vibrating concussion caused by the "resistance" of the door, is communicated to every part of the system, including the lock; which, though situated at a distance from the point of impact, is thus burst open by the concussion or "shock". But had the striking-surface of the battering-ram been more acute (*i.e.*, pointed) than a hemisphere, by the nature of the *sharpness* of its point it would have *pierced* through the door instead of being "resisted" by it, and the sharp point not being "resisted," it would have administered little or no "shock".

Thus again we find that any *sharpness* or *smallness* of breaking surface of a projectile, or a *velocity that destroys resistance too quickly* also destroys "shock".

Yet how often we see, as an advertisement of the powers of the modern "High Velocity" rifles as an efficient big-game rifle, illustrations of a steel plate pierced through and through by a H.V. bullet, alongside of the hole of which is a small "dent" only

on the surface of the plate which is intended to convey the idea of a relatively smaller game-killing power of an "ordinary" rifle of equal bore.

As I write I have before me one such illustration : a steel plate which is "dented" only by an "ordinary" .450 rifle shooting 5 drams of black-powder, and alongside of this dent is a small hole pierced through and beyond the steel plate made by a H.V. .450 rifle shooting a cordite charge corresponding to a little over 6 drams of black-powder.

Now, in practice, the bullet of the much-despised "ordinary" rifle is quite capable of penetrating to the furthest side of the largest big-game, beyond which it is not required, while its slower velocity would meet with greater "resistance" in the animal and so give a much greater "shock" to the system. On the other hand, the quicker velocity of the H.V. bullet, which pierced through the steel plate, in the body of an animal, will destroy the "resistance" *too quickly*, and without "resistance" the surface of the bullet cannot "expand" nor administer "shock"—the physical sensation of which at the moment is only an insignificant sting, as it whips through and beyond the animal, so wasting its energy on the empty air beyond, which, with a lower velocity, might have been much more usefully expended *in* the animal on a relatively stronger "resistance" and consequently greater "shock". The more the surface of a bullet is "resisted," the more it will expand ; and *vice versa* ; the less it is "resisted" on account of its excess of velocity destroying the resistance too quickly, the less it will expand.

Now, the truth of the latter statement is interestingly demonstrated by another section of the same illustrated advertisement referred to *ante*, which represents the surface of the H.V. bullet before and after it has pierced the steel plate. On comparing these two surfaces, it is evident that the piercing of the steel plate has scarcely expanded the bullet at all, on account of its excessive velocity having destroyed the "resistance" too quickly. It is a pity that the expansion of the lower velocity bullet has not also been illustrated, for the greater "resistance" to it must have flattened out its surface enormously, which bullet, driven by five drams of powder from a properly-constructed rifle, is, we know, sufficient at *our*

sporting ranges (in spite of the slight dent it makes on the surface of a steel plate) to penetrate to the further side of the largest big-game, and so with its greater "expansion" and "resistance," causes a greater "shock" and a *wider* destruction of tissues, and with sufficient penetration, than the smaller penetrating surface of the H.V. bullet.

Thus the quality which is the boast of the modern H.V. rifles, their ability to pierce steel plates, etc., is the very quality that disqualifies them as rifles for dangerous game, for their very excess of velocity and smallness of penetrating surface nullifies "shock".

Now, I will ask my reader to consider what would the results have been had there been a tiger's body in the place of this steel-plate : the H.V. bullet that punched only a small hole through the steel-plate, would do the same through a tiger, passing, let us say, an inch behind the heart, without administering any "shock" of which the tiger would scarcely feel any more at the time than a slight sting. On the other hand, the lower velocity bullet that flattened out on account of the greater "resistance" to it, would have made a *wider* hole, perhaps rupturing also a portion of the heart missed by the smaller penetrating-surface of the H.V. bullet, given a vastly greater "shock," as well as penetrating to the further side of the animal, beyond which it is not required.

There is a theory to the effect that the quicker the velocity of a bullet, the more it *should* be expanded by the resisting atoms not having time as it were to get out of the way of the surface of the bullet. But the amount of resistance experienced by the surface of a projectile is made up of an infinite number of parallel resisting-forces which have a resultant (acting in the same direction) which is equal in *strength* to the sum of those forces. So the larger the surface of a projectile propelled at a given velocity, the larger will be the number of such resisting-forces and the greater their sum or total strength of resistance, and, *vice versa*, the smaller the breaking-surface, the smaller the sum or strength of resistance.

However, though in this manner we may arrive at the same result theoretically by either : a total strength of a smaller number (*i.e.*, smaller surface) of *stronger*, (*i.e.*, the "impact" of a higher

velocity) parallel forces, or the total strength of a *larger* number (*i.e.*, larger surface) of weaker (*i.e.*, the "impact" of slower velocity) parallel forces, yet in actual practice our capacity of velocity on account of recoil, etc., is limited, and quite insufficient to obtain, by virtue of "impact" alone, with a small-surfaced bullet, the required amount of expansion in metals which have also the necessary weight.

If the surface of the projectile is so small (as is generally the case with H.V. rifles) that the total *strength* of the resistance to it is less than the corporal strength of the material with which the projectile is made, it stands to reason that it will not expand at all.

In order to get over this inherent difficulty of obtaining with a small front-surfaced bullet, sufficient expansion with the limited amount of velocity at our command, these bullets are nowadays being systematically constructed of materials that are so fragile and light—light in order to be resisted—that they frequently, I might say usually, fly into little bits the size of No 4 shot long before they have obtained sufficient penetration, when of course all further penetration, destruction of tissues, *vis viva* and "shock" are lost.

This invariably happens when such "doctored" bullets strike a bone, and if they do not strike a bone, they frequently do not "set-up" at all, merely making a small hole through and out of the animal.

Such bullets are made *light*, because: the "resistance" to projectiles of similar surfaces varies as the squares of their velocities, while the velocities communicated by equal forces to two projectiles of different weights are approximately in the inverse ratio of the square roots of their weights; so that the initial velocity of a 1-oz. bullet is about twice that of a 4-oz. bullet. So the 1-oz. bullet will meet an "impact-resistance" about four times that of the 4-oz. bullet of equal front-surface, on account of the greater overcoming power of the latter.

Hence these H.V. bullets are frequently made of a light composition in order to obtain a quicker initial velocity and so obtain a stronger "impact-resistance," and, in order that the latter may be stronger than the material of the bullet, the bullet is made of some fragile composition, with disastrous results from a sporting point of

view. While if they are made of sufficiently (for penetration) strong and heavy material, the *strength* of the extra *vis viva* and the greater corporal strength of the material will be greater than that of the *strength* of the sum of the comparatively small number of parallel forces that are resisting such a small surface ; so that the surface will not expand at all, merely whipping through and out of the animal, which at any rate is better, in that its further penetration is more likely to come across some vital spot which the lighter and more fragile bullet stopped short of.

If the quality of the "resistance" in the body of an animal were constant, the employment of a bullet that is *supposed* to go on expanding more and more with the greater "impact" of every increase in velocity, might be feasible, but as the body of an animal is made up of bones, muscles and tissues of almost every degree of density and form, the action of such fragile materials is far too uncertain.

The truism, obvious as it is, is often overlooked, that after all the amount of possible expansion in any given material is limited to its breaking-up point, beyond which no amount of extra velocity can obtain more expansion. Even with that most reliable of all sporting metals—soft-lead—I find in practice that no amount of increase in velocity will make a given soft-lead bullet expand more than a certain amount, beyond which the edges of the expanded surface merely chip and fray off when a certain stage of expansion has been reached, so losing after this more and more of its *vis viva* the more this disintegration is caused by the "impact" of increased velocities.

Thus, when the uncertainty in regard to the quality of "resistance" which the bullet may meet disqualifies the employment of brittle or fragile materials in a bullet, and even the most serviceable metal, soft-lead, refuses to be expanded beyond a certain limit by the "impact" of velocity alone, we must honestly admit the fact and increase the original front-surface of our bullet if we wish to obtain the amount of expansion which we are unable to obtain by the "impact" only of the greatest velocity at our command. That is to say, when the highest practicable velocity is incapable of obtaining the required amount of expansion when a small front-surfaced bullet is used, we must increase the original surface of the bullet and so



obtain as in practice we can, the required amount of expansion, by thus obtaining the strength of the sum of a *larger* number of parallel forces to resist the larger surface.

I repeat that it is impossible in practice to always obtain a sufficient amount of reliable and serviceable expansion with a small front-surfaced bullet. An expansion similar only to that of No. 4 shot *may* be obtained with such a bullet only when it is made of material that is excessively light and weak, which of course can obtain little penetration and is so useless for sport.

Again, if, for the sake of obtaining sufficient penetration with a small front-surfaced bullet, sufficient weight in such a bullet is retained, this weight has to be packed away in an additional body behind this small front-surface, giving the bullet an elongated form.

It has been shown that we cannot get "expansion" without "resistance". But there will be no resistance of its surface if the bullet glances *away from* the resistance, and this is exactly what every kind of *elongated* bullet is *most* apt to do.

It is admitted that the quality of resistance which the surface of a bullet may meet during its passage through an animal is most uncertain, so that while one portion only of its surface is being greatly resisted, the remaining portion of the surface may be meeting with little or no resistance.

Now, as long as the *resultant* of the parallel forces, that are resisting the front-surface of a bullet, passes through the centre of its gravity, the axis of the bullet will remain perpendicular to the plane of resistance, but the moment the resistance is oblique, such as when one portion only of the surface meets with the curved portion of a bone, or when there is a denser resistance of muscles, etc., on one side of the surface of the bullet than on the other, the direction of the resultant is at once transferred to one side of the centre of gravity, which will create a motion of rotation round the centre of gravity which will be equal to the strength of the force causing it *multiplied by the perpendicular distance* of its direction from the centre of gravity. This of course at once upsets the perpendicularity of the axis of the bullet to its plane of resistance, and so causes it to change its course off into the direction of the least resistance ; in other words, causes it to deflect.

Again: the longer the axis of a projectile is in proportion to its diameter, the further is its centre of gravity from the centre of its figure; and the more the centre of gravity fails to coincide with the centre of the figure, the greater will be the perpendicular distance from the centre of gravity to the direction of the resistance.

Hence the longer the axis of a projectile is in proportion to its diameter (*i.e.*, the more elongated it is) the more liable it is to be upset and deflected on meeting with an oblique resistance (which it is bound to meet in an animal); and, *vice versa*, the shorter the axis is in proportion to its diameter, the less likely it is to be deflected; while the projectile that has the shortest possible axis not less than its diameter is the sphere. Hence of all shapes, the sphere is the least likely of any to be deflected on meeting with an oblique resistance, and so more likely to be "resisted", and thus more likely to be "expanded" and so cause greater subsequent "resistance," "shock," and destruction.

It has already been pointed out that, for the resistance on all points on the surface of a bullet to be equal at the same time during its progress through the body of an animal, is almost an impossibility; so that the higher the velocity of the bullet the greater will be the "impact-resistance" on some one portion of the front-surface, and the more elongated the bullet is the further will the centre of its gravity be from the direction of this lop-sided resisting force, both of which combined make it practically an impossibility for a small-surfaced elongated bullet to maintain a straight course through an animal to a given vital spot within it. Such a bullet aimed at the shoulder of a tiger with the object of piercing it to the heart beyond, on meeting previously with a stronger resistance, such as a denser bit of muscle or bone, on one portion only of its surface, is certain to be deflected, perhaps merely running round on the outside between the skin and outer bones, or glancing off towards the tail of the tiger, instead of holding a straight course through all obstacles to the heart; in fact, it may glance off into *any* direction but the right one, taking a line of *least* resistance so that there is always a great probability of such a bullet not "setting-up" at all, or, even if it does eventually get expanded, it may not do so until after it has already

been deflected off into the wrong direction, where it may be little or no use. I have known this happen in practice over and over again in the case of conical bullets. I will give one of many such flagrant instances that I have known to occur.

At a place called Ghogri, in the Chindwara District, there was, in 1885, a very old male tiger known by the inhabitants to have been in that locality for the extraordinary period of 40 years. In that year this old tiger was fired at by Mr. T., then Deputy Commissioner of the District, his 10-bore rifle *conical* bullet striking the tiger in the shoulder, but to his astonishment it failed to floor the tiger, which escaped and recovered. Two years later, on the 24th of March 1887, I killed this same old tiger here, and recovered the conical 10-bore bullet from a kind of a sack that had formed round it in the loose skin under the neck on the further side. The old bullet mark on the shoulder and other indications below the skin showed that this bullet had been deflected and made to run round on the outside only in this absurd manner by some oblique resistance of *muscles only* on the shoulder of the tiger.

After this, when a *conical* bullet from such a large rifle, with its necessarily heavy charge of powder, is deflected to such a harmless degree by mere muscles, what doubt can there be that the lighter and even more elongated bullets of the modern "High Velocity" rifles will be even more erratic, uncertain, and perhaps harmless, both on and in the body of an animal.

Not only in the animal but also on its way to the animal the liability of any kind of conical or elongated bullet to be deflected by the most trivial objects, such as twigs and branches, constitute one of their worst defects in big-game shooting in dense forests. I have frequently lost big-game in this manner, where, had I been using a heavy spherical ball by reason of it having a shorter axis in comparison to its diameter to be upset and so deflected, it would have crashed its way through all obstacles both on the way to, and in, the animal to the vital spot aimed at.

I have now endeavoured to show not only that the "impact-resistance" of the highest velocities at our command is insufficient to obtain the amount of resistance that is necessary to cause the required amount of expansion for our purpose in sport with a small front

surfaced bullet containing sufficient weight and strength for penetration, but also that the very shape the necessarily elongated form of such a bullet is entirely against it obtaining the necessary "resistance" to expand it sufficiently on account of its inherent tendency to avoid or glance *away from* such a "resistance".

The only remedy then, is to increase the original front surface of the bullet, *i.e.*, use a larger gauge, and so obtain by the means of a larger number of parallel resisting-forces, that which a limited amount of velocity at our command fails to obtain with a smaller surface ; and by also reducing the axis of our bullet to the shortest dimension not less than its diameter, that is, by making it a sphere, the risk is reduced to a minimum of the surface of the bullet avoiding the "resistance" by glancing away from it. Thus, provided the power of the rifle used is able to obtain a low-enough trajectory and sufficient penetration at *our* sporting range, *i.e.*, up to 125 yards, all of which can be obtained with a properly-constructed 12-bore spherical-ball rifle (as will be shown later), any given weight in a bullet will be best employed in a spherical form, for this obtains the maximum amount of resistance, expansion, shock and wider destruction of tissues, with a minimum liability to deflections from its true course, both to and in the animal.

For the reasons already given, in my opinion no projectile with a striking-surface of a diameter of less than, at the very least, half-an-inch, no matter how high the velocity within our command, is able to obtain sufficient resistance to its surface and the consequent expansion that is necessary to give the requisite amount of "shock" to the system of dangerous game. And yet, in the "steel-plate" advertisement referred to *ante*, it is stated in regard to the said '450 H.V. rifle that it is equal to an 8-bore rifle with black-powder.

From what has already been said on the subject, it will be seen how absolutely impossible it is in practice to obtain, with any regularity, with a small striking-surface bullet, the required amount of expansion and "shock." The very excess of velocity, combined with smallness of striking-surface and the extra weight of the elongated forms of such H. V. projectiles destroys (not to say most often altogether avoids) "resistance" too quickly, and so nullifies "shock".

Thus the quality which is the boast of the modern much-vaunted "High-Velocity" rifles, their ability to pierce steel-plates, etc., is the very quality that disqualifies them as rifles for dangerous game.

Apparently, the reason why (apart from the "striking" advertisements) these rifles have obtained a certain amount of reputation, is that the smaller front-surface and quicker velocity of their bullets obtains a somewhat flatter trajectory and so enables a bullet to be placed with greater accuracy on a given vital spot when the animal is standing, though a bullet from a pea-rifle placed with equal accuracy might have been equally as fatal.

It may be as well in passing to mention that the "drop" in a bullet due to gravity is as the square of the *time* during which it is suspended in the air. Thus if a bullet drops 4 inches in one second of time, in two seconds it will drop, not 8 inches, but 16 inches; in three seconds, 36 inches, and so on. But besides this, we have also the resistance of the air which slows down the pace of the bullet the further it goes, so that it will take a longer *time* to travel the second hundred yards than the first. For convenience of illustration let us assume that a bullet takes one second to travel the first hundred yards; but that owing to the resistance of the air, it takes two seconds to travel over the second hundred yards. We then find that, in travelling over the whole 200 yards, the bullet has taken, not two seconds, but three seconds. That is to say that, whereas the drop due to gravity at the end of the first 100 yards for one second of time was only 4 inches, this drop at the end of the whole 200 yards for 3 seconds of time, is  $4 \times (3)^2 = 36$  inches, not merely 16 inches at the end of 200 yards as when calculated without the effects of air-resistance.

It will be noticed that the "drop" due to gravity during the earlier part of the journey is comparatively insignificant, and that this rapidly accumulating "drop" assumes serious proportions only after a certain period of time (which in this case is synonymous with distance) has been passed.

This comparative insignificance of "drop" is true, fortunately, of *our* sporting range. A properly-constructed 12-bore rifle, with only a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn of spiral in the barrel, and shooting 6 drams of

black-powder, to hit the mark at 85 yards will have a trajectory which will be only about 1 inch at its highest point above the line of sight, and only about 1 inch below it at 100 yards, and about 3 inches below it at 125 yards. For it to *hit the mark* at another 15 yards only—namely, at 100 yards, this height of trajectory is at once about doubled, namely, about two inches above the line of sight at 50 yards, and about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches below it at 125 yards; but to hit the mark at only half this distance again, namely, at 150 yards, the trajectory will have to be about 8 inches at the highest point above the line of sight. And so the ratio goes on increasing in enormous proportions the further we go beyond our sporting range of 100 or 125 yards.

Thus, with the above spherical-ball rifle we obtain a point-blank range up to 100 yards, in which the greatest variation above or below the line of sight is only one inch, which is quite good enough for all practical purposes in shooting at any ranges up to this distance of 100 yards (even up to 125 yards); for one inch one way or the other does not count for much in the actual conditions of big-game sport.

A straight line in the flight of a bullet we cannot have under the existing laws of nature, which ordains that a body in the air must commence to drop the moment it no longer receives artificial support, of the barrel in the case of a bullet. So that even a smaller-surfaced bullet is bound to drop a certain amount in a hundred yards, though it may be only a fraction less than that of a larger bore. But, when the drop of one inch at our range of 100 yards of the larger bore makes no material difference to our purpose, it follows that the fraction of an inch less drop of a smaller bore makes little or no difference either, so we gain little or nothing materially at *our* sporting range in dense forests by the fraction of an inch less drop of a smaller bore, whereas we would lose enormously in other ways by a smaller-surfaced bullet as already explained at some length.

It is only then, at distances *beyond* our sporting range, that the small air-resisting surfaced bullet is superior in matter of lowness of trajectory, where it is of no concern of ours.

Thus, when up to our sporting range of 100 or 125 yards a large bore spherical-ball rifle enables us to obtain a sufficiently high velocity, lowness of trajectory, combined with a large striking surface, great expansion, shock and sufficient penetration to the furthest side

of the largest animals, with a minimum liability to deflections, where, in the name of common sense, is the necessity of courting all the unnecessary risks and inefficiencies already enumerated, by employing a small-surfaced elongated projectile.

A projectile travelling at a given velocity will always have the same *vis viva* or work in it until the latter has been *expended on something* either in driving a comparatively *small surface* for a *long* distance, or a large surface for a *short* distance, whether the surface be air or matter, and it cannot stop until all of it has been so expended.

Thus, a small front-surfaced projectile at a given energy may drill a small hole through the body of an animal ; but, because, in doing so, it had not spent all its energy, it expended the remainder on the empty air beyond the animal and is so wasted. Instead of wasting this energy, let us reduce the length of the same bullet and so add to the width of its striking surface increasing the charge of powder a little to give it now the same velocity as before ; the bullet will now expend its energy on driving a larger surface in the animal and if this penetrates to the furthest side of the animal, we will have obtained the best possible results of expansion, shock and area of destruction.

Therefore, penetration in each case being sufficient, the bullet which has the largest striking surface is the best ; for, of two wounds of equal penetration, that which is the *wider* will have the greater effect on the system, in that it will be "resisted" by, and will destroy in its course a greater area of blood-vessels, nerves, bones and other tissues in proportion as it is larger than the other, and so cause more sudden blood-letting, destruction and "shock" to the system of the animal, as well as being more liable to rupture on its way a portion of some vital organ such as the heart or brain, than the narrower wound.

So why, again, should we waste all this energy on the empty air beyond the animal by giving the bullet a small front-surfaced elongated form, to say nothing of all the other intolerable attributes inherent to such a form, when we can expend every scrap of this given energy *in* the animal as above, by making the bullet less elongated and therefore with a larger surface to drive, thus meeting with greater

“resistance” and so causing greater “shock,” wider destruction of tissues with sufficient penetration in the animal—namely, to the furthest side, beyond which it is not required.

The *vis viva* or amount of work of which a given bullet is capable is measured by its weight, multiplied by the *square* of its velocity; it is therefore of the greatest importance that the velocity should be as great as possible, for we thereby obtain not only a lower trajectory, a longer point-blank range and less allowance to make at running game, but we also obtain greater impact, expansion, shock and penetration.

Hence, if we were to use a conical ball instead of a spherical ball in our 12-bore weapon, the heavier conical ball with the same charge of powder will be slower, and would so cause us to lose on every one of the above points, which is one more argument that, with any given gauge and charge of powder, the form of projectile that gives us the best results in every way is the spherical.

For our purpose then, we must now come to the conclusion that, for big-game shooting in dense forests, the spherical ball,—and the spherical ball only—with any given gauge and charge of powder, will give us the best results. We will therefore proceed to examine the qualifications of the spherical-ball weapons.

It must be admitted that a spherical ball permits of being put into a higher velocity in a plain barrel which has nothing in it to retard it, than in a rifled barrel which clutches on to the bullet as it passes up the barrel, while the more elongated a projectile is in a rifled barrel, the more surface it presents to the friction and clutch of the grooves, and the more it is retarded. So it is nothing extraordinary that a spherical ball from a smooth-bore 12-gauge gun shooting  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 drams of powder should have muzzle-velocity of some 1,500 feet per second and nearly equal to that of some of the modern “High Velocity” small-bore rifles.

A 12-gauge smooth-bore built to shoot 5 drams of powder will shoot a spherical ball *with a firm patch* to hit a mark at about 85 yards with a trajectory of only about one inch above the line of sight, and only about one inch below it at 100 yards, so that the point-blank range of such a weapon is about 100 yards, with a muzzle-velocity



fully 1,500 feet per second, which is greater than that of some of the said H.V. rifles.

The ostentatious title of "High Velocity," with which these modern small-bore rifles have been distinguished, is obviously intended to convey the idea that their velocity at sporting ranges of big-game sport is far superior to that of any other kind of weapon. Probably, a majority of persons, who have not taken the trouble to think closely on the matter, are under this impression. If so, this is a great mistake. Such an impliedly differentiating title, when applied to *our* sporting range of 100 or 125 yards, is a deliberate misnomer ; for their velocity over this distance is materially (in its material effects in sport) no more than can be attained to by an ordinary large gauge smooth-bore. They certainly have a "higher-velocity" at the longer ranges, *beyond* our sporting range, but with that we have no concern. Hence a smooth-bore has just as much a right to be entitled a "High Velocity" weapon as these rifles ; in fact more so, in that a smooth-bore requires a smaller charge of powder to carry with the same trajectory, than a rifle of the same gauge.

One point of the utmost importance to be remembered regarding spherical balls, is that they touch the barrel only on their peripheries, and have no expansive base to prevent "windage" ; so that, unless the sphere fits the barrel absolutely tightly, a large portion of the gas will escape through the space between the bullet and the barrel, instead of exercising the whole force on the rear of the ball ; with the result that the bullet may strike the ground only some ten yards in front.

If a 12-gauge ball were used with a 12-gauge barrel, the latter might be burst, for which reason the ball is always cast a size smaller than the gauge of the weapon.

But if you fire a 13-gauge ball without a "patch" from a 12-gauge barrel, the explosion is apt to sound as if the powder were bad, or like a "hang-fire," and the bullet may strike on the ground, perhaps only ten or twenty yards in front. Eight out of ten shots will be like this if you fail to "turn down" the cartridge properly and do not use a "patch," for, instead of propelling the ball, the gas merely escapes past the ball, while it is yet in the barrel.

But if the ball is encased in a stiff "patch" or covering of cloth which is thick enough to make the bullet fit tightly in the barrel, and the cartridge is firmly "turned down" over the bullet, the padding of cloth will choke up all the interstices between the barrel and periphery of the ball, so that the gas, in having now no space through which to escape as before, is obliged to exercise the whole of its force on the rear of the bullet, and there is now an honest explosion and recoil, which was very wanting before this "patch" was used in this manner.

I have no doubt that a great number of sportsmen are prejudiced against spherical bullets, simply for the want of this piece of knowledge, simple as it is. And the same applies to spherical-ball rifles.

With a substantial "patch," but not otherwise, which fit *tightly*, wonderfully good shooting can be done with a smooth-bore and a spherical ball. In this manner  $3\frac{1}{2}$  drams obtains a point-blank range up to 60 yards (on the mark at 50); 4 drams up to about 75 yards (on the mark at 60), and 5 drams up to 100 yards (on the mark at 85). The point-blank range here being the distance up to which the ball will travel without at any time being more than about one inch above or below the line of sight. The 12-bore spherical ball rifle will attain the same ranges with 4 drams, 5 drams and 6 drams of powder respectively, getting on the mark at 100 yards with six drams of powder with a trajectory nearly as follows: at 25 yards  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch above the line of sight; at 50 yards about 2 inches above; at 75 yards about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches above; on the mark at 100 yards; and about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches below at 125 yards.

This rifle must not have more than at most a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -turn of spiral in the barrel. With such a slight twist in the barrel, it will be almost as easy for the bullet to slip out of it as out of a smooth-bore, and with a "patch" will give the bullet a sufficient amount of rotation up to this short range to prevent it acquiring any other irregular rotations. But, to dispose first of the smooth-bore:

It does not follow that because we are able to obtain a sufficiently low trajectory at our sporting-ranges with a smooth-bore, that the flight of its bullet may not be otherwise erratic. It is true that a perfect sphere is the only figure which in *itself* contains the conditions necessary to true flight, namely, in which the centre of gravity

coincides with the centre of the figure. But the regular production of the "ideal" sphere, perfect in sphericity and homogeneousness, is beyond human skill. Consequently the centre of gravity of a spherical bullet might lie in any position in the barrel.

If the direction of a force acting on a sphere passes through its centre of gravity, that sphere will fly straight without any rotation (we are not at present considering the effects of air-resistance); but, if through some flaw in the structure, the centre of gravity lies to one side of the centre of the figure, the direction of the force will pass to one side of centre of the gravity, and so create a motion of *rotation round the centre of gravity*, and as the latter may be lying in any position in the barrel, there will be no knowing whatever in which direction the rotation may be taking place when the sphere leaves the barrel, unless we give the sphere an artificial rotation. If this rotation is from left to right, the bullet will "drift" to the right, and *vice versâ*; if the rotation is from above downwards, the bullet must fall and its range thus lessened; or, if its rotation is from below upwards, it will rise and its range increase accordingly. Any one of these, or any intermediate direction of rotations may occur from a smooth-bore.

But from a really well made cylinder gun, such divergencies on the part of a spherical bullet up to at least 60 yards are so insignificant as to be immaterial for all practical purposes of big-game shooting. But at distances beyond 75 yards (in badly made guns, at even 40 yards) such divergencies often become so magnified as to render the bullet quite inaccurate and unreliable. Hence the necessity, in shooting beyond 75 yards, of giving the bullet a *known* divergency, by giving it an artificial rotation by means of a "rifled" barrel, the known divergency of which can then be artificially regulated for in the construction of the rifle.

In a badly made smooth-bore there is also another cause for erratic rotations and flight, in that the dimensions of such a bore not being the same throughout, it permits "windage," and the bullet also bumps from side to side as it were, so that if the last bump as it leaves the barrel happens to be on the upper portion of the barrel, it will be deflected downwards, and *vice versâ*, or in any other direction opposite to its last bump. This may be effectually overcome by the use of a

substantial "patch," which should be wrapped neatly over the bullet and then well greased over. Always remember that it is impossible to obtain good shooting with a spherical ball, either from a smooth-bore or a rifle, unless this "patch" is made to fit the barrel *tightly*.

As already mentioned, a smooth-bore permits the highest possible muzzle-velocity of any bore with a given charge, for there is nothing in such a barrel to hold on to and retard the progress of the bullet as it passes up the barrel, as occurs in a barrel that is rifled. By rifling the barrel in order to make it clutch on to the bullet and so give it a rotation, we retard the bullet, which will therefore take a longer *time* to travel over a given distance than the same bullet from a smooth-bore, and will therefore "drop" more at that distance than a smooth-bore bullet. Not only will the lower velocity cause the bullet to "drop" more, but will, for the same reason as already explained, not "expand," and so lose in "resistance," shock and area of destruction. These consequences of the *lower* muzzle velocity of a rifle bullet, as compared with that of a smooth-bore bullet, are often overlooked.

Therefore, in order to give the rifle bullet a velocity equal to that of a smooth-bore, the charge of powder will have to be increased; to enable the recoil of which to be tolerated, the weight of the rifle will also have to be increased, for the heavier the rifle is in proportion to the bullet, the less will be the recoil and the greater the velocity of the bullet and *vice versa*.

Again, the heavier the bullet the greater will be its *vis inertiae* and the slower it will be in giving way before the expanding gas; which, in consequence of its longer confinement, rises to a higher temperature and elasticity, so that the pressure and recoil caused by the heavier ball is greater. But added to this, in a rifle we have the bullet again retarded by the "clutch" of the grooves on the sides of the bullet, which is precisely the same as adding something to the weight of the bullet.

Thus in a rifle we get a much greater recoil, which must be counteracted to be tolerated, by an increase in the weight of the rifle.

Again, the longer a projectile is, the greater will be the degree of rotation required to keep its point foremost to its true line of flight without upsetting and vibration, and consequently greater will be the

degree of spiral that is necessary to give such a rotation, and the more will be added on the above principle to the weight of the bullet and to the consequent recoil of the rifle, while the longer the projectile, the more surface it will have in contact with the sides of the barrel, and the more it will be retarded by such friction, thus also adding to the recoil.

On the other hand, a spherical ball touches the barrel only in its periphery, while its axis, being the shortest possible one not less than its diameter, requires only a *very slight* degree of spiral in the grooving of the rifle to enable it to travel with sufficient accuracy up to the limit of our sporting ranges in big-game shooting, especially if a "patch" is used—an accuracy which will remain unimpaired, no matter how high the velocity we use may be, which is not the case with a rifle with a greater degree of spiral.

A rifle that has an excessive spiral in order to maintain the point of its elongated bullet to the front, is unable to use a heavy charge of powder, for the quicker velocity will not give the bullet time to follow the grooves in the barrel, with the result that the bullet will "strip" from the grooves, and thus not only fail to give the required rotation to the bullet, but will also distort its external smoothness and form, which both combined will render the flight of the bullet hopelessly inaccurate even at the shortest ranges.

For these reasons we are able to use a much higher velocity at short ranges with spherical bullet than with any form of elongated or conical bullet of the same weight, and so obtain a much greater expansion on the part of our bullet, and consequently greater resistance, shock, a wider wound, and, at the same time, sufficient penetration in the animal.

It is a great convenience in all-round forest shooting to be able to decrease or increase the charge of the rifle at will without materially effecting its accuracy, for we do not want the same overwhelming smashing force on all occasions whether we are shooting at only a small deer or at a large and tough animal like a buffalo. And this can be obtained only in a very slightly spiralled spherical ball rifle. One more point in favour of the "spherical" ball.

The only effect of increasing the charge is to make the point-blank range longer, and make the rifle hit harder, so causing more

expansion, shock as well as penetration with its accuracy unimpaired, for no "stripping" will occur with so slight a degree of spiral, which with a substantial "patch," is yet sufficient to prevent the spherical ball obtaining any prejudicial rotation other than that for which the rifle is regulated.

The recoil of a rifle depends on the relative weights of the ball and rifle. Thus the heavier the rifle is in proportion to the ball, the less will be the recoil, and *the greater will be the velocity communicated to the bullet* and *vice versâ*. A man who has his back up against a wall is able to exercise a far stronger force in giving a push, than without such a support. The weight of a rifle acts in the same manner as the wall, and the heavier the rifle the firmer will be the support afforded by the breach against which the gas has its back at the time of explosion, and the greater will be the strength of its push on the rear of the bullet, in front of which there is no support whatever other than air. The only resistance which a bullet can give to the force of the gas is that of its own weight. Hence the heavier the bullet is in proportion to the weight of the rifle, the less will be the velocity of the bullet and the greater will be the recoil on the part of the rifle.

I consider that the maximum weight of a rifle for all-round handiness and comfort should not be more than about 12 lbs. More than this is too cumbersome and clumsy; and the lighter it is than this the better, *provided* its weight permits the other far more necessary qualifications. The above mentioned 12-gauge spherical-ball rifle shooting 6 drams of powder weighs 12 lbs. and has a recoil that can be tolerated, though a slightly greater degree of recoil would certainly make it disagreeable. Therefore, if a heavier (*i.e.*, conical) projectile were used with this rifle with the same charge of powder, on the above-mentioned principle, the recoil would be greatly increased, perhaps making it intolerable. So in this case we would have to reduce the charge of powder, which would promptly result in a much slower velocity on the part of the heavier bullet and consequently greater "drop," necessitating a considerable elevation of the muzzle and consequent curve in the path of the bullet, and the missing thereby of all intermediate objects. In fact, it would have to be on the old mortar principle of simply pitching the bullet on top of the object, not straight along at it.

This is the fault of a great number of conical-ball sporting rifles, even among "Express" rifles. Instead of being content with an honest point-blank range of from 85 to 100 yards, they are frequently constructed to hit the mark with an ostensibly point-blank sighting at about 150 yards, the rib of the rifle being purposely raised for this purpose, with the result that intervening objects are missed by some 5 or more inches, unless an allowance is made by mental calculation, for which in actual practice and the excitement of the moment there is rarely any time. Consequently, a bullet fired from such a rifle at the neck of a tiger at fifty yards, frequently results in a heart-breaking miss. Such weapons have really no "point-blank" range at all.

Thus, in view of my remarks regarding the evils of the proportionate heaviness of conical bullets as compared with spherical balls of the same gauge, we again come round to the adage of this chapter, namely, that with any given weight of rifle, this weight is best employed in projecting the largest spherical ball with the largest charge of powder that can be conveniently tolerated. And these are exactly the conditions attained in the 12-gauge spherical-ball rifle above-mentioned.

The smaller front-surfaced bullet of a .450 Express rifle obtains a comparatively *longer* point-blank range, for which reason gun-makers are good enough not to spoil this rifle for shooting at our sporting ranges by giving it an excessively raised rib. Such rifles are therefore more to be relied on as a rule for accuracy at sporting ranges than .577 Express rifles; for the effect of the extra charge of powder which the latter permits is not commensurable with the effect of the extra surface and weight of their larger and heavier bullets. .577 rifles have in consequence a shorter point-blank range as a rule than the .450 rifles; and, in order to make them *appear* to have an equally long point-blank range, are frequently constructed with an excessively raised rib, thus making them shoot too high at short ranges. In fact, such rifles sacrifice their shooting at the very ranges where we require the greatest accuracy with them and where we obtain the greatest number of shots in big-game sport in dense forests, in order to obtain accuracy at distances which are beyond our sporting range.

*If they were properly constructed* for the purpose, the extra *vis viva* of a '577, or even a '500 Express rifle bullet would probably be sufficient in most cases to stop the charge of a tiger, though in my opinion they are not to be compared with a spherical-ball weapon of equal weight and charge of powder, whose larger gauge permits a larger striking-surfaced bullet.

I have in my time been obliged to face on foot, and to stop the charge of dangerous game scores of times; and on most of these occasions I have used in preference, either a 12-gauge spherical-ball rifle shooting 6 drams of powder, or a 12-gauge smooth-bore spherical-ball gun shooting  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 drams of powder. No charging animal ever succeeded in reaching me in the face of this rifle when I was using with it 6 drams of powder and a soft lead spherical ball; and only on two occasions did a charging tiger succeed in reaching me in the face of the above smooth-bore. But on the one and only occasion when I used a '450 Express rifle in order to stop the charge of a wounded tigress, it failed to stop her and I got terribly mauled in consequence.

Thus, after forty years of constant practice and experiments on the field, I am forced to the conclusion that no amount of increase in velocity or the doctoring of the material of the bullets, can be relied on to give sufficient expansion, penetration or a straight course in the body of an animal, if the projectile used has a smaller striking-surface or an elongated form.

We will now examine the operations of the spherical ball.

The acts of firing at animals may be divided into two classes: first, the "first shot," and, secondly, subsequent shots at a wounded animal or when stopping a charge.

In our first shot at an animal our first consideration must be to do the greatest amount of *permanent* damage to it; so the bullet should penetrate to the furthest side of an animal and not stop short perhaps only half-way and so leave some vital organ lying beyond in the same course undamaged. Thus, if the velocity we employ is so high as to expand the surface of the bullet so much on impact, that it is prevented by the excessive expansion from obtaining sufficient penetration in a large and tough animal like a buffalo, we must, in order to enable the surface of the bullet to retain its smaller



original shape, reduce the charge of powder ; the smaller surface of the bullet thus obtained will not be resisted so much so that it will penetrate further, theoretically, with a smaller charge of powder than with the expansive impact of the larger charge, anomalous as this may seem. But this charge is so very hard to regulate correctly, and so much depends on the quality or density of the substance met by the bullet, which in a big animal may be a huge bone or only soft flesh, that it would be very unsafe to reduce the charge, unless we use a *hardened* bullet.

If a hardened bullet that cannot expand is used, the *lowest* velocity should be used that is compatible with breaking through the greatest possible obstruction in the body of an animal, and penetrating it to the furthest side, but no more. The greater the velocity beyond this with a hardened bullet, the less will be the "shock," as already demonstrated at some length in this chapter.

Therefore, speaking generally, with a soft-lead bullet the greatest velocity the rifle is capable of should be used, for by this we obtain the flattest trajectory, a longer point-blank range, the greatest impact-expansion, resistance, shock, width of wound, and probably also sufficient penetration to the furthest side of the animal. Thus, if the maximum charge of 6 drams is not sufficient to send a soft-lead bullet to the furthest side of the game, harden the bullet with an admixture of tin, and with it use only 5 drams of powder, instead of six drams.

The above I consider to be the rule which should regulate all our manipulations of powder and bullet in big-game shooting.

In my younger days I used only 4 drams of powder with my 12-bore rifle, and found that the soft spherical bullet frequently did not penetrate far enough in bison and buffaloes ; so, in order to make it penetrate sufficiently, I hardened the bullet, and (herein was my mistake) also increased the charge of powder. But with this, though the penetration was more than enough, I soon began to notice that the bison did not seem to mind them near so much as the softer bullets with less penetration ; so that I frequently lost animals, who appeared to feel no more than a slight sting as the excessive velocity whipped the hardened bullets through and beyond them. I then reduced the charge of powder, and found that though the shock-

effect on the animal was perceptibly greater, the *vis viva* of the bullet was frequently insufficient to enable it to penetrate far enough if it met a large bone. So I went back to the soft-lead bullets and used the increased charge of 6 drams and found an astonishing improvement in the effects on my shooting all round. The shock that these bullets gave appeared to be tremendous, and their expansion and the width of the wound very great, especially if a bone was met; while penetration in most cases was ample, sending on one occasion with my 12-bore rifle and 6 drams of powder, a spherical soft-lead bullet through a huge bull-buffalo *lengthways*, piercing him from end to end.

Simple as the above conclusions appear to be, it yet took me a number of years of intermittent practice to arrive at them definitely in regard to the rifle. One reason for this was that, as I usually obtained most of my shots at comparatively close quarters, generally within forty yards, I found it handier to use my smooth-bore with 4 drams of powder and a soft-lead spherical bullet, with which I was able to drive the bullet through both sides of buffalo and bison. The expansion on impact of these bullets were of course not quite so great as that of those from the rifle with 6 drams of powder, and therefore did not give so great a shock as the latter. For the smooth-bore to have been equal in effect to the above rifle, I would have had to use 5 drams of powder, which was a bit more than I cared to stand or risk with such a light-weight gun.

Now, in regard to stopping the charge of dangerous game. Here we are not concerned with what the permanent damage done may be—we must strive for the greatest instantaneous effect. So here (though in the case of a first shot in the ordinary way at an animal, the expansion and consequent shock of the bullet may be sacrificed in order to obtain a longer, though narrower wound), I hold that, if necessary, penetration should be sacrificed to obtaining the greatest knock-down blow or shock, by using the largest spherical soft-lead ball, propelled by the largest permissible charge of powder; for even if this does not penetrate far enough to do sufficient permanent damage to vitals lying behind, it will yet, on the “brick-principle,” give such a shock to the entire system of the animal as to probably floor it on the spot, even though the bullet might not

strike any particular vital spot which is an important consideration, for, in such cases, generally no particular aim can be taken.

To obtain this knock-down blow a large breaking-surface is a *sine qua non*, to obtain which we cannot rely on any amount of velocity when the bullet has a small front-surface or an elongated form. So, to make quite certain of obtaining a large penetrating-surface, the original surface of our bullet must be a large one, and to obtain a sufficiently low trajectory, as well as much expansion and penetration as possible, we must use as large a charge of powder as the recoil of our weapon will permit.

Now a rifle, on account of the clutch of the grooves on the bullet, gives a greater recoil and slower velocity to the bullet, than a smooth-bore of equal gauge, weight and charge of powder; so that the recoil of a smooth-bore of equal weight and gauge will allow the use of a larger charge of powder, hence a better velocity, trajectory, expansion and shock than the rifle. Thus, for about the same recoil, we could use a 12-gauge smooth-bore weighing about 12 lbs. and shooting 8 drams of powder. But such a velocity, being excessive, would reduce rather than increase the shock, for, as already pointed out, the material of the bullet will not expand beyond a certain amount, but simply chip off round the edges, and the excessive velocity would overcome the "resistance" too quickly and so destroy "shock".

So, instead of wasting energy in this manner, we should increase the gauge of the bullet. Thus an 8-gauge smooth-bore weighing 12 lbs. and shooting 7 drams of powder, for about the same recoil as the 12 gauge rifle shooting 6 drams, or the 12-gauge smooth-bore shooting 8 drams, would obtain an enormously greater stopping and shock-giving power, and with a good enough trajectory at a short-charging range up to about 40 yards.

Therefore an 8-gauge smooth-bore weighing 12 lbs. and shooting 7 drams, would be *par excellence* the weapon for stopping the charge of dangerous game provided the shooter is strong enough to wield 12 lbs. in his hand as if it were no more than a toy. A larger gauge than this (unless specially constructed to hit a mark, at, say, 25 yards, when they would be of little use for accurate shooting beyond 35 or 40 yards) would ordinarily shoot too high to stop a

charge at 30 yards, for their charge of powder being comparatively small, on account of the recoil of such weapons, necessitates an excessively elevated rib to enable them to hit a mark at 80 yards, for about which they are usually constructed—besides the weight of such weapons being considerably greater, being some 15 to 17 lbs.

In a charge at close quarters you may not have time even to bring your weapon to your shoulder and may be obliged to fire from the hip, and the fraction of a second's delay might cost you your life, while a weapon that weighs some four pounds more than another will take fully a second or more longer to bring to your shoulder and to sight.

Theoretically, I would recommend to a man of average strength the above 8-gauge smooth-bore for the following up of wounded dangerous game. But, personally, though I could with ease lift a 100 lbs. weight over my head, if the two weapons were lying side by side, in an emergency I would probably on impulse grab my old 12-gauge in preference to the, to me, strange 8-bore, which apparent contradiction I can only explain on the grounds of habit, for I have never been well enough off to afford the luxury of an assortment of weapons for each and every phase of sport; and two weapons only—a 12-gauge smooth-bore and a 12-gauge rifle—were generally made to meet all my requirements, using 6 drams of powder with my rifle, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 drams with the smooth-bore.

My rifle, having a somewhat greater velocity, I frequently used on occasions when, in following up wounded dangerous game on foot, I knew I would certainly be charged; and also used it for the longer shots in more open cover. But in all shooting under about sixty yards I almost invariably used my smooth-bore as being the quicker and handier weapon of the two; even in following up wounded dangerous game, if the cover was dense and there were indications of the likelihood of having to take perhaps a number of snap-shots at the game on the run, as frequently happens—I always preferred my smooth-bore. I do not know whether I would be justified by my experiences in this line to recommend the above smooth-bore as being altogether quite safe for the purpose. But, though it has been good enough to pull me through scores of scrapes, with only

two really narrow shaves, I feel inclined to recommend a slightly larger gauge bullet and heavier charge of powder, provided you are strong enough to wield such a weapon with ease, which a man of average strength would probably be able to do in the heat of such an exciting moment, if not, well, better leave the game alone, is my advice.

Our prime object in firing at an animal is to kill or disable it *on the spot*, and so avoid a long stern chase and unnecessary cruelty. So it may be open to question whether, even in a first shot at an animal, "shock" is not more important than extreme penetration, and permanent damage in that "shock" is more likely to disable an animal on the spot, even if it is only temporary, and would so enable a second shot to be fired into it. On the whole, I think the considerations are in favour of the largest possible breaking-surface.

Now, in regard to the "handiness" of weapons: In my opinion a comparatively short barrel is much handier in every way for shooting in dense forests, the weight thus being more compact and better balanced, enabling a quicker aim to be taken, and is less tiring to carry about.

But a smooth-bore, to shoot shot well, must not be truly cylindrical, but relieved at the breech and muzzle. In a long barrel, this boring-out extends to a greater length, and is thus required to a lesser degree than in a short barrel, so that a ball fitting the minimum diameter of each, is more liable to allow "windage" in the short barrel than in a long one. Therefore, if a smooth-bore is required to shoot shot up to 45 yards and ball up to 60 yards, with a reasonable amount of accuracy, the length of its barrels must not be under 30 inches; though I consider 30-inch barrels sufficient to attain both these conditions in a well made smooth-bore.

Again, the narrower the gauge of a weapon, the more elongated will be its cartridge, so that the upper portion of the powder next to the base of the bullet will be further away from the point of ignition at the cap, and will take longer to ignite than the lower portion of the powder, with the result that the bullet will have already travelled a certain portion of the barrel before the upper portion of the powder has ignited. The result of this is, if the barrels are so short, that the bullet will have already left them before the upper portion of the

powder has also ignited ; the bullet would thus not receive the force of the entire charge. Therefore, in a narrow-gauge weapon the barrel must be longer, so as to enable the bullet to obtain the force of the entire charge before it leaves the barrel.

On the other hand, in a large-gauge weapon, the charge of powder lies over a larger and therefore thinner area, and so ignites as a whole almost simultaneously, so that the bullet receives the full velocity of the whole charge almost instantaneously, for which reason no extra length of barrel is needed ; for, once the bullet has received the fullest effects of the whole charge, any extra length of barrel beyond the length that is necessary to enable it to do this, can only serve to retard the flight of the bullet by unnecessary friction. Hence the larger the gauge, the shorter the barrels may be, and the "handier" is the weapon.

The length of a 12-gauge rifle should not be more than 26 inches, and 2 to 4 inches shorter in larger bores.

Now, to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, though I do not mean to saddle him with the responsibility of my own sins and omissions, I should mention that some portions of the data referring to theories in this chapter are based on the second edition of that excellent little treatise entitled "The Sporting Rifle" by Lieut. J. Forsyth, published in 1867. But in doing so, I may perhaps lay some claim to having helped him, in however humble a way, to the conclusions finally arrived at in his work in regard to the best possible weapon for big-game shooting in dense forests, for he and I were living in the same bungalow in 1866 when he was at the height of his experiments which were naturally to me, as one of the keenest of young sportsmen as I was then, of the utmost interest, so that at that period I devoted all the time I could spare to helping in those various experiments.

Since then, after a further period of 42 years of practical experience and experiments with almost all kinds and conditions of weapons, including the "latest-moderns," under almost every conceivable combination of circumstances of big-game shooting in dense forests, I now find that the conclusions we arrived at more than forty years ago (in regard to the spherical-ball weapons being the *only* weapons that fulfilled *all* the conditions necessary to a big-game killing

weapon) still hold good in spite of the much-vaunted "improvements" (*sic*) obtained by modern science in this branch.

In one matter, however, the conclusions drawn from my own personal experience is quite different to that of Forsyth ; that is, in regard to the reliability of any kind of explosive shell in big-game shooting. For one thing such rifles require an excessive spiral to keep the point of the shell foremost, and consequently have too slow a velocity and a bad trajectory. But their worst faults found to be that they invariably exploded on striking a bone, so often making only a large external wound, with the eventual escape of the animal, to die a miserable and lingering death from maggots and gangrene. Many tiger, bison and buffalo I have lost, owing to explosive bullets of various kinds, the poor brutes going away with perhaps a broken and swinging shoulder, with an external wound almost large enough for a man to put his head into. So that I, finally, eschewed explosive bullets altogether, preferring to trust to the expansion of solid soft-lead spherical bullets to cause the amount of necessary damage with a certainty of, at any rate, obtaining sufficient penetration, which no kind of explosive bullet can be relied on to obtain.

As for some of the extraordinary bullets with which some of the modern "High Velocity" rifles are served, I think the following may be taken as an example. I will here refer my reader to the photo given here of Mr. Clifford Batten, a well known sportsman of Mussoorie, who is shown seated by a dead tigress. This tigress was shot and recovered by Mr. Batten in the presence of Mr. J. S. Stone, late Inspector-General of Police, Punjab, and one other gentleman, all of whom personally vouched for it to me, as to the accuracy of what occurred on that occasion, besides signing their names to an account of this affair, which was publicly printed in May 1906 in newspapers, under the title of "Extraordinary Feline Vitality." This tigress was shot *through the brain* by one of these new sporting bullets from a .450 "High Velocity" rifle, the brains being spattered on the ground, and yet this tigress travelled over a mile after receiving this wound, and was still alive when found 12 hours afterwards.

In the late wars in South Africa and Manchuria, there were several authenticated instances of men having recovered after having had







their heads pierced from one side to the other by small-bore H. V. bullets that had not "set-up". This is apparently what occurred with this tigress. How far would she have gone had she been struck in this manner by a 12-gauge spherical ball?

Before closing, I am prompted to again warn my readers in regard to the use of spherical balls, for I have known some sportsmen to construct their bullet cartridges by merely taking out the shot with the aid of a knife and then pushing in the spherical ball and merely crimping the end of the paper case over the ball with their fingers, instead of at least "turning-down" the end *firmly* with a machine. Cartridges made in this careless and slipshod way are extremely unreliable and erratic, and in many cases the bullets from them merely strike the ground some twenty-five yards away, the explosion often sounding like bad powder or hang-fires. It is very dangerous to play the fool in this way when after big game, and it would be fatal in most cases to the shooter to try to stop a charge with a cartridge made in this manner.

To facilitate the insertion of a spherical ball with its "patch" into the mouth of a cartridge, place the egg-shaped butt end of rammer or powder-measure into the mouth of the paper case and press gently with a twisting motion, which will at once bulge out the mouth of the case evenly on all sides, enabling the ball with its "patch" to be then slipped in with ease. The ball should be pushed firmly with a rammer on to the felt wad, where it must be fixed firmly so as on no account to rattle about—to ensure which further, some soft wax may also be pressed round the ball; after which the rim of the cartridge must be firmly "turned-down". A ball-cartridge made in this manner is the only one of its kind hitherto invented that can *always* be relied on to shoot hard without loss of power and accuracy in windage.

My last word to all gallant sportsmen is that, in dealing with large or dangerous game, whatever you do, never be induced to use any kind of weapon, the diameter of whose bore is less than half an inch; failing a spherical-ball weapon, as herein recommended, then use the nearest you can get in its specifications, such as a *properly-constructed* .577 bore rifle, which has nearly enough *vis viva* and a comparatively short axis to be deflected. Properly armed, then use your *own* wits,

and do not depend too much on the wits of others, and you will become a successful sportsman.

### ADDENDUM.

If the reader will refer back to the second paragraph on page 650 of this chapter, he will see the words : " One point of the utmost importance to be remembered regarding spherical balls is that they touch the barrels only on their peripheries, and have *no expansive base* to prevent 'windage,' so that, unless the sphere fits the barrel absolutely tightly, a large portion of the gas will escape through the space between the bullet and the barrel, instead of exercising the whole force on the rear of the ball." On re-reading this paragraph the idea occurred to my son : " Why not give the ball an expansive base ? " The result evolved by him from this idea is represented by the following sketch :—



THE " CAPED-SPHERICAL BULLET ".

" A " is a solid soft-lead sphere ; " B " is an inverted saucer-shaped attachment moulded with the solid sphere. The hollow of the inverted saucer is placed immediately on top of the powder, without any wad between. When fired, the powder forces the cape " B " over the head " A," exactly as a man puts back the cape of his great-coat over his head when it rains. Thus instantaneously all of any space there may be between the periphery and the walls of the barrel is filled up, so that having no outlet for escape the whole of the force of the explosion is compelled to act on the rear of the bullet. It is also obvious that it is impossible for a bullet of this kind to turn over while in the barrel ; so it gets no " spin " from the action of the explosion. Our personal experiments also show that such a bullet does not " spin " either during its flight through the

air after leaving the barrel ; for when fired into a soft mud bank that will not spoil the shape of the bullet, and dug out carefully, it will be found that the original *base of the bullet is still to the rear.*

No spherical bullet hitherto has been able to attain these results, the necessary effects on the accuracy of its flight, which are obvious ; for it neither loses any of the force of the powder, nor “spins” either in the barrel or during its flight through the air up to about a hundred yards ; we have not yet tried it at longer ranges.

It will be noticed that, by using a sphere of a smaller gauge, such a bullet could be used with safety and equally good results from any choked-bore gun.

As this bullet has only been invented a few days, we cannot speak of it from practical experience as regards its effects on game. But its principles are sound, and its results on a range far superior to any other spherical bullet we have ever tried. We leave the reader to form his own conclusions as regards its merits from practical experience in the field. The manufacture and sale of this bullet will probably be commissioned to some experienced gun-maker in Calcutta.

F. C. H.



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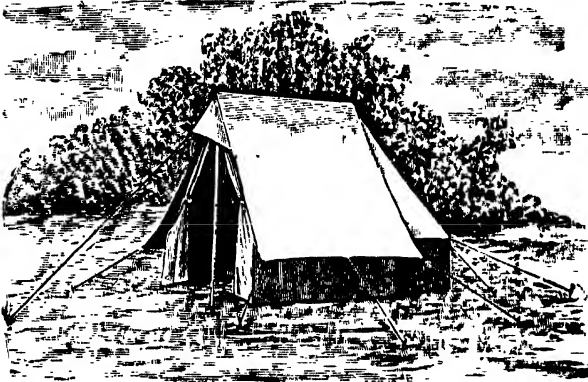




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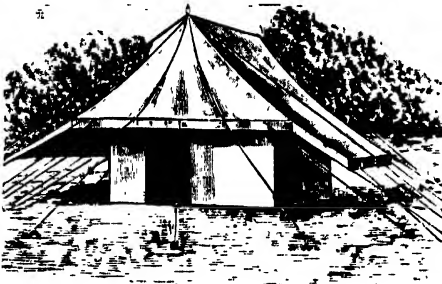


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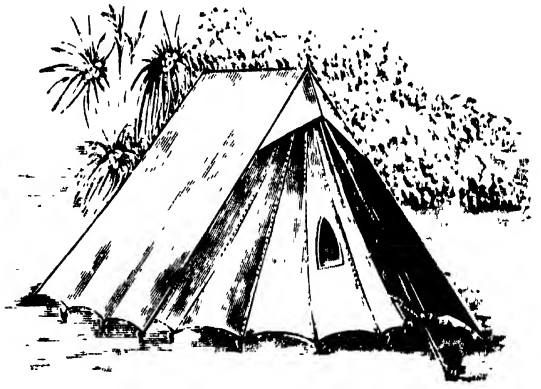


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